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ITALY REVISITED.

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BY

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'ITALY, PAST AND PRESENT,' 'ITALY IN 1848,' 'FRA DOLCINO, HISTORY OF PIEDMONT,' 'COUNTRY LIFE IN PIEDMONT,'
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ITALY REVISITED.

CHAPTER I.

FROM ROME TO FLORENCE.

The Roman Railway-Station—Guelphs and Ghibellines—The Railway makes us acquainted with strange Fellow-Travellers—A distinguished Fellow-Traveller—Railway Talk—The Pope and the Washerwoman—The Pope and the Earthquake.

THERE was something in the railway-station at Rome, as I left that city at the end of the season by the night mail to Florence, which reminded me of the stalwart steed with the two riders on his back, described by Ariosto.

There are few of us who do not recollect the pleasing episode at the opening of the poem.

Two knights, a Christian and a Paynim—Rinaldo and Ferraù—fight a whole hour for the possession of a fair lady, Angelica, the heiress of the Empire of Cathay, who, seated on her milk-white palfrey, witnesses the combat, of which she is to be the prize.

All of a sudden, seized with a panic, the damsel turns her horse's rein and gallops across the woods.

The two champions, perceiving their loss, lower the points of their swords and agree to put off their contest, and ride in pursuit of the fugitive. The Pagan's charger however happens to be absent without leave, and his baptized antagonist, with a courtesy based on love of fair play, vaults on his saddle and bids his dismounted adversary get up behind, that they may together overtake the maiden and renew the combat which is to decide of her fate. Thus the two heroes set off, Templar fashion, the courser's sides bleeding from their four spurs.

Here the bard's fancy takes fire at the noble instance of chivalrous generosity himself has conjured up, and he breaks out in his loftiest strain, "Oh! the marvellous loyalty of these ancient knights! They were rivals in love, enemies in faith, and their bones were still aching all over with the fell blows with which they had been mauling each other; and yet away they go together, through thick woods, along dark winding paths, without a shadow of mistrust of one another." *

* "Oh gran bontà de' Cavalieri antiqui!
Eran rivali, eran di fè diversi,
E si sentian degli aspri colpi iniqui
Per tutta la persona anco dolersi,
E pur per selve oscure e calli obliqui
Insieme van senza sospetto aversi."

ORLANDO FURIOSO, i. 22.

A railway-train leaving Rome towards mid-summer in these days takes with it more than one couple, who have as little reason to love, and yet seem as little disposed to dread or suspect, each other, as the two gallant cavaliers who urged the same charger on the track of the coy Cathay princess. The train was, as it is every night at this season, an extremely long one, for political life is at this time at an end in Rome, and with the few senators and deputies, whom business has hitherto detained, the cry is at last, "Devil take the hindmost!" There will actually be nobody left behind—the bluff *Re Galantuomo* away to Val Savaranche, on that lofty mountain-ridge which parts the waters of the Orco from those of the Dora Baltea, eager in pursuit of his *stambecchi*, or wild goats—the Ministers all scattering about anywhere far from the Roman malaria; some dipping in the Mediterranean waves at Ardenza or Viareggio, others taking their plunge in the Adriatic at Rimini, Ancona, or the Venetian Lido; others again breathing the fresh mountain air either on the shore of a pure lake at Lugano, or at the foot of some grim Alpine pass, like the Stelvio in Valtellina. The double set of Quirinal and Vatican diplomatists will soon follow, and with them many of their subalterns, porters, lackeys and scullions.

With one of the very last batches of these public men, great and small, I also took my departure. The honourable members of both Houses and their

friends, who purposed to travel by that night train, all belonged to New Italy. The "fire-steed" which was to carry them was their property, and they of course put their best foot in the stirrup, and were soon at home in the saddle; in plainer words, they got into the first-class carriages and ensconced themselves and bags in the snug corners. But in the midst of the crowd, pushing and jostling, either to be off, or to see others off, were also the men of Old Italy—men, for the most part, in long black coats, knee-breeches and three-cornered hats—the men who believe in the Vatican, and the men who without believing find their interest in running errands for it. These showed great eagerness to elbow their way to the train, and to get on with the others, whether, like the Christian Paladin, they found empty corner-seats, or, like the Moslem Knight, they had to jump up, *en croupe*, viz., sit bodkin in the inner seats.

Between the people of these two classes there is, as we all know, no love lost; and every one who, arriving late and out of breath, made up to the carriages in quest of a place seemed at first disposed to be particular about the choice of his fellow-travellers. But the railway is a peace-maker, as well as a leveller. There are actually in Rome two cities, with only one way out of it. The Clericals and the Liberals may shun one another like the plague while they abide in the town, but they must needs be brought together when they

travel to or leave it. The Pope has, or may have, if he applies for it, a post and telegraph-office all to himself; but a railway of his own he does not possess; and although he could always have a special train, and order out the superb saloon carriage with the golden cross-keys the company place at his disposal,—just as he could, if he would take to the sea, have anything, from a fishing-boat to the redoubtable French frigate, the Orenoque, about which so much ill-blood has arisen between France and Italy since it was moored four years ago at Civita Vecchia, and which is now so overgrown with barnacles as to find it difficult to move at all,—the same accommodation is not tendered to his clergy; and priests of all ranks, up to scarlet and violet prelates, are compelled to scuffle for their seats like common mortals, obedient to the orders of the guard, who stows away his live cargo like herrings, and never sets off till he has each compartment "*complet*," little caring whether the till at the ticket-office has been filled with the money of the Pope-blessed *Caccia-lepri*, or by the excommunicated *Buzzurri*—these being the appellations by which the two hostile parties are styled by one another.

To see the Ghibellines of the Quirinal look askance at the Guelphs of the Vatican as, in spite of visible repugnance, they have to brush elbows and cross legs in the same carriage, is supremely amusing. A priest on board a ship manned by a

superstitious crew is hardly looked upon as a worse kill-joy and wet-blanket than he is here, when told by the *conducteur* or porter, who shoves him in, that "there is yet one place for him on the back seat." The lively, bantering chat, with which the last minutes before the start had been whiled away among friends and colleagues, drops at once and there ensues a blank, though not positively rude stare, which the unwilling intruder either meekly shrinks from, or boldly meets and returns, as his natural disposition prompts him to be pacific or defiant.

In most cases however all parties soon become aware of the necessity of at least mutual forbearance and common Italian courtesy; and the lamp is shaded, faces are turned from each other and muffled up, and the journey is performed, if not in amity, at least in silence, darkness and sleep.

A tall and stately, and by no means shy or timid, but perfectly good-humoured, gentlemanly prelate happened to be my *vis-à-vis*. He was remarkably fair and handsome, and I ought to have immediately recognized in him the man who had lately officiated at some grand religious ceremony, and was described in the newspapers as "the handsomest priest in the whole Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church."

He had a crowd of friends and dependants about him, three or four priestlings, one or more advocates, several domestic servants, and apparently some

chance acquaintance. All of them, one after another, pressed eagerly forward to the carriage window for a last word, and kissed his pastoral ring, as he affably held out his hand to them.

He addressed them in a variety of languages, some in good French or Italian, some in German, others in idioms unknown to me, but which by the sound I supposed to be Slavonic.

My surmise was that he was an Austrian prelate, a Schwartzenberg or mayhap a Strossmayer; at all events a German, bishop of one of the Eastern dioceses of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

There were a few words exchanged between us as we started; then we both made the best of our cramped position and slept, or seemed to sleep, through the night.

Towards morning we came in sight of Arezzo, and, as I murmured to myself the name of the place, Monsignore, who appeared to be less acquainted with the route than I was, addressed me a few questions, and conversation began in good earnest.

I confess that I was for some time baffled in my attempts to make out who he was.

There is and has been for some time a great stir among the higher Roman clergy; and as I heard my fellow-traveller was on his way not to Agram or Prague, but to Paris, I gave up my first guess that he was an Austrian bishop, and took it for granted that he was one of the many pontifical agents who are canvassing the world, and especially France, on

behalf of what they call the "Catholic interests," —*i. e.*, Peter's pence, pilgrimages, and eventual crusades.

I congratulated him on his excellent Italian, claiming as a native to be a tolerably fair judge of the subject, and he informed me that he had lived in Rome a good many years, and had lately spent several summers as well as winters in the city without a change of air.

"But you spoke Slavonic last night," said I, "and are certainly no Slave by blood. Probably I have the honour to speak to one of the Polyglot wonders at the Propaganda."

"I have but little to do with the Propaganda; but, as you say, I am no Slave; I am an Englishman."

After that of course no more was needed, because I was personally acquainted with one of the English Monsignori; I knew another by sight; a third I had lately heard preaching, and a fourth was said to be ill in Paris. There remained a fifth whom most people know, though I did not.

We were soon at home on a variety of subjects, and became at least as good friends as the Rinaldo and Ferrau of Ariosto during their ride across the woods on the same steed.

I had hitherto paid no attention to the six other travellers whom chance had given us for companions on the way; but they were already one after another emerging from their wrappers, and stretching their limbs, and reconnoitring the world through which

the steam-engine was whirling them. Monsignore and I were evidently unknown to them, as they to us; but as they listened to our talk, in which among much English a few words of Italian were mixed, they began to gape and stare, wondering, as they noticed the evident cordiality of our intercourse, who the layman could be that travelled on such intimate terms with a prelate, and in their own hearts setting me down as one of the *Neri*, or "Blacks," as I, from some undefinable signs about their looks and costume, should have had little hesitation in describing them as "Reds."

Now in neither of the extreme dyes of those two colours is there much discretion, and no sooner had those six friends come to their own estimate of our persons and characters, than a very animated gabble began among them, the main topic of which, so far as one could make anything out of the din of voices, and of the confusion of strong Northern accents, was—the Pope.

They seemed to know everything about the aged Pontiff. How subject he is to sudden outbursts of wrathful humour; brooking no contradiction, and satisfied with no small amount of servile adulation; how not only noble guards, officers of the late Papal gendarmerie, and other lay functionaries, but even clerks of the Dataria, and occasionally also household prelates, had to put up with terrible scolding, and were frequently driven from the Apostolical palace at the shortest notice; how bitter

the Pope could be even in his pleasant humour, and what withering sarcasms he would mix up with puns and jokes in which scurrility was as conspicuous as senility; how he played one of his Ministers against another, mistrusting, deceiving, and in the end throwing them all over—all but his "Giacomo" (Cardinal Antonelli), the one he likes least, but dreads most, and whom he nevertheless delights in twitting and thwarting, lending himself to all sorts of underhand tricks and plots to defeat his policy; how, in his heart of hearts, Pius IX. detests even the Jesuits—he, the "White Pope," always wishing, yet never daring to break through the toils of the "Black Pope," Father Beckx, the General of that order—a master ill-disguised in a servant's livery.

This was the Pope as described by our Red friends, and they illustrated the character they were drawing by scraps of Vatican gossip commonly current in Rome, piquant, if not authentic; how on a late occasion the Holy Father thought himself poisoned, he little knew whether by a drug administered by a quack monk, Fra Salvatore, whom he trusted, or by an antidote prescribed by his Court physician, Viale Prelà, whom he mistrusted, and was made dreadfully sick, and thought he was dying, when "he was only preserved by the miraculous interference of the Heavenly Powers," —a dispensation which did not however soften his heart to his doctor, whom he dismissed, and

who died broken-hearted at his disgrace,—and how throughout that trial the Pope was supported by his implicit belief in the written prediction of a washerwoman, Anna Maria Taïgi, now dead and in odour of sanctity, who more than thirty years ago, among many particulars respecting Giovanni Mastai Ferretti, "which have all come true," foretold that "he should be Pope, and outlive his ninetieth year."

How much of this was spoken at us, or at least at my very reverend friend, I could not say, nor could I make out whether he heard, understood, or noticed what was said; but what is certain is, that, if he did, he bore it without flinching, without wincing, impassable as a Red Indian at the stake. He continued to address a few remarks to me on indifferent topics, then threw himself back in his seat, and took his usual morning draught of that anodyne of a Catholic priest—the breviary.

That was the surest way of baffling his tormentors if their design had been to annoy him. The talk at the other end of the carriage soon languished, and was presently turned to other less offensive, if not more edifying matters. But—I can hardly say how it came to pass—when the breviary was laid aside and Monsignore again addressed me, I fell almost unconsciously upon the subject which had dropped on the other side.

Of a strange piece of indiscretion the Pope had lately made himself guilty. Scores of victims, it

may be remembered, had been buried by an earthquake, under the ruins of private and public edifices in the Venetian province of Belluno. The Cathedral of that town was irreparably damaged; a church at Feletto had crushed the priest, with many of his congregation attending mass, and was a heap of ruins; crowds of men, women and children were without shelter. A year had just elapsed since that occurrence, and alarms were felt about an impending renewal of the catastrophe. This reminded me of the Allocution in which the Holy Father had so far forgotten himself as to make political capital of the earthquake. "What shall we say?" the Pope had burst out, "of this glorious display of God's justice?" And he launched out into a thundering invective against "the Revolution," and pointed out the evidence of God's wrath against its authors, enumerating the floods, the storms, the mortality among children, all the scourges by which Providence visited the deeds of the spoilers of the Church. With a grim jocularity he even compared the cholera setting in from one side and the earthquake from the other, with the "Right" and "Left" of the Chamber of Deputies, which was just then dispossessing religious corporations. "Ha!" the Pope said, substantially, "you rob the Church, do you, gentlemen? Take *that!*" As if he himself wielded and hurled the earthquake.

"Really, Monsignore," I observed, "I believe

the Pope would never have allowed that Allocution to appear in print, if he had been well advised. Poor old gentleman! I can feel for him. I am told he is subject to frequent fits of depression; that there are moments he is not quite sure of himself, and talks like one who does not know what he is saying. Surely he must see that his desperate clinging to earthly power, his preposterous aspirations to infallibility, have rather damaged than benefited the Church."

I felt I trod on safe ground in venturing thus far, for I knew I was speaking to a Catholic "born, not made,"—one of those who would never have brought forward "the Dogma" for discussion at the Council, and who, even when the "Converts" carried it by a packed majority, were "convinced against their will." "I do not even know," I went on, "how much the Holy Father may have reason to congratulate himself on his good fortune in surviving Peter's years. Perhaps he may feel, with many other men, that he has lived too long; and that the violation of an order of things to which so long a series of precedents had almost imparted the force of a natural law portended evil rather than good, and the power which he wielded for more than twenty-five years was destined to break in the hands of him who was permitted to exceed that fated number.

"You best know, Monsignore, whether the Pope, at his age, has sufficient strength to nerve him

against superstitious apprehensions; whether he does not himself believe in that *Jettatura* with which he is taunted by certain persons" (with a glance at our fellow travellers), "that 'evil eye' which brings misfortune on all around, upon those the Pope is most anxious to befriend, upon those by whom he hopes to be befriended and upon himself."

I offered these remarks, with all due deference, and Monsignore listened with a bland, well-bred smile, without assenting, yet without interrupting; for he is placed by his office too near the person of the Pontiff to consider "Infallible," synonymous with "faultless." No Pope is a saint in the estimation of his household prelate.

I therefore turned to the subject of the Belluno earthquake, and said:—"Since men whom His Holiness calls 'wicked' have taken from him those temporalities which men certainly not less wicked had given him, the Pope sees 'the Finger of Providence' in all the ills flesh is heir to. It would seem as if there had never before been floods in Lombardy or earthquakes in Calabria; as if Vesuvius never ravaged the environs of Bourbonist Naples, or the Tiber never overflowed its banks in Papal Rome till now; as if intense hard work never shortened a man's life before Cavour's, or affected a man's brain before Farini's. It is true, many of the men who waged war against the Temporal Power are dead, and the Pope lives. But should not that rather sweeten than sour the Holy Father's temper?

Should he not learn and teach that God's will is to be adored and not discussed, or even interpreted? Is it not folly to ask how it is that—

'Lisbonne est en poussière et l'on danse à Paris'?

There sits Victor Emmanuel; there are his Ministers, Senators, and Deputies deliberating—the guilty ones who have 'robbed the Church'—all at hand, in Rome itself, or not far from it. Why should the Pope's Avenger have gone so far to seek His victims among the guiltless boors of Feletto, at worship, on their knees before Him. There stand Monte Citorio and Palazzo Madama, the two Houses of the Italian Parliament; would they not have made grander ruins than the rubbish of a poor parish church and the cracks of an old cathedral in Friuli?"

Monsignore continued silent, for he evidently has too much sound English sense to share the violent prejudices of an Ultramontane, or the animosities of a convert.

We had now gone through the tunnels from the rich territory of Arezzo into the not less fertile district of the Upper Val d'Arno. The drought of summer had not yet set in; the land was verdant, luxuriant, a very garden of the olive, the vine, and the mulberry, with the signs everywhere of an advanced cultivation and a dense population, and of that taste and elegance which give evidence ot widely-spread and deeply-seated well-being.

"See there, Monsignore!" I cried out, pointing to right and left. "This is the country upon which Pope Pius once invoked Heaven's blessings, and upon which he is now heaping his curses. Can you tell me whether it be his earlier or his later prayers that have been listened to? How are we to know which of our sublunar events are to be called providential? '*Non si muove foglia che Iddio non voglia,*' says the pious Italian proverb, and in England they say, 'What is, is for the best.' Where else would, in history, be the end of God's work, and where the beginning of the Devil's? Why should Pepin and Charlemagne have been instruments in the Almighty's hand in building up the Papal throne, and not Cialdini and Cadorna in overthrowing it?"

The answer of Monsignore, just as he was about to vouchsafe it, was interrupted by the shrieks of the engine announcing our arrival at Florence, and by the hurry and bustle of the travellers bundling themselves and their bags from the carriages. The noble prelate however did not leave me without shaking hands and "hoping to see me again," a proof either that the divergence of views between us was not very great or that his good-breeding was proof against the free expression of opinions which might happen to clash with his own.

CHAPTER II.

ROME AND FLORENCE.

Italian Cities—Rome—Florence—Val d'Arno and Campagna—Florence the Fair—The Arno—Italian Rivers—Wood and Water—Rivers and Forests—The Evil and its Remedy.

From Florence to Rome there is only a ten hours' journey, yet nothing is more striking than the contrast exhibited by what is now, and what it was four years since, when the capital of Italy.

All Italian cities have their peculiar type and character, and it seemed especially designed by Providence that a country which was to be endowed with the "fatal gift of beauty" should derive its main charm from variety. One travels from Genoa, perched on a rock, to Venice floating on a marsh; from Turin, compassed by hills, to Milan lording it over a flat; from Verona, cramped in a gorge, to Bologna reclining on a slope. Ancona projects on a headland; Naples hugs a bay in her bosom; Palermo is embosomed in a shell; Siena, Perugia, Spoleto, Orvieto and a hundred more, crown the heights, but not one diadem is like the other, either in shape or in the majesty and

grace with which it towers on the brow or slouches from it.

The quaintness of the interior everywhere corresponds to the originality of the outward appearance. Every place has its own mark in the style of its buildings. Here it is the heavy dome, there the slender spire, the massive square tower, the battlemented bastion, or the blank convent-wall that predominates. You go from landmark to landmark; from the Ghirlandina of Modena to the Torrazzo at Cremona; from one leaning tower at Pisa to two of them running up at angle at Bologna. There is no spot but has its own wonder to boast of; if not a church within the walls like the Cathedral of Orvieto, then one in the neighbourhood like the Certosa of Pavia; if not a town-hall with the largest saloon, as at Padua, then one with an unequaled façade, as at Piacenza. The pride of each Italian locality was always aiming at something that could diversify it from all other localities. As Milan, when building a cathedral, exhausted her powers in ornamenting the roof, so Siena, when busy at the same task, exerted all her ingenuity in inlaying the pavement.

Rome and Florence have little more than this in common, that they both lie in a valley and have a river flowing through them. But the valley in Rome is closed in by hills which time and man have almost obliterated, and the river is only seen from the bridges, unless glimpses of it are caught

at a few out-of-the-way spots like Ripa Grande or Ripetta. The position of Rome is, perhaps, the grandest in the world, but the town itself is the meanest. From culminating points you have views of unrivalled magnificence; but the town itself is nowhere seen to advantage. There is nowhere a *coup d'œil* such as the "Boulevards," the "Ring," or "the Unter den Linden," which other great cities boast; nowhere such an expanse of broad streets and squares, such open quays, such clusters of stately edifices as befit a great capital. The name of churches and palaces in Rome is legion, but they are scattered at random in different quarters, and hide themselves out of sight as if conscious of the ugliness which, with very few exceptions, characterizes their external architecture. Modern, as well as ancient Rome, aimed at effect through grandeur; it attained its object in the interior, but took no heed of the style of the exterior. Rome is the city of the *Seicento;* it dates from the worst epoch of Italian intellectual and moral corruption. Papal architects, the men who worked for Borghese, Pamphili, Barberini, and other Nepotists, seem to have done their utmost to mar the fronts and roofs of old Basilicas, by sprawling saints, unmeaning wreaths and curls, and *rococo* ornaments, while the nephews enriched by those Popes, who rifled ancient monuments of marbles wherewith to rear their own mansion, as if anxious to conceal their theft, left their outer walls so plain and rustic, that the

Borghese Palace, for instance, has little in its outward look to distinguish it from the common run of Manchester warehouses. There is nothing to cheer a man's eye as he rambles through Rome. The Palace of Venice, the Farnese, and the Cancelleria, are alone venerable. The façade of every church, St. Peter's itself not excepted, is an eye-sore.

The pretensions of Florence are by no means as high as those of Rome. It aspires to no greatness, but is always faithful to its instinct of beauty. The long winding sweep of its lovely Lung' Arno was always a pleasant breathing ground; but since the demolition of the walls, the whole town is out in the air; many of the streets have been widened, and the new quarters round the Fortezza da Basso, about Piazza d'Azeglio, and Porta Piuti, as well as the hills all the way up to San Miniato, have been laid out in flower-beds and flower-walks. Look at the town and country from any point, and all is open before you, courting your attention, challenging your admiration. The city is old, even ancient, but it shows no ruins, it exhibits no symptoms of decay. It is all fresh and sound and gay, tidy in its mediæval massiveness, sober in its modern elegance, true to its old civilization, yet not unmindful of the exigencies of the new. The city is one in plan and design, like a well-contrived drama or epic poem. The severe genius which built the Palazzo Vecchio and Santa Maria del Fiore runs through it all. You have here a traditional style, a

local law of order and harmony; a people whose education has been the work of centuries; a community in which the beautiful is an affair of State, where æsthetic enjoyment is the first want, and art the main business of existence. The Florentines will rather leave the front of a church unfinished for six centuries, aye, and to the end of time, than run the risk of committing an architectural solecism.

Outside the walls the balance between the two cities is more even. There can be nothing in the world lovelier than the Val d'Arno, nothing more lively than the sight of those cypress-crowned hills, of those white villas glittering all over the landscape, "budding from the soil which seems all teeming with them," as was sung by the poet, who expressed a wish to bring them together and "make two Romes out of them."

But the country round Florence is too much like a city, and its villas are too many and too close upon one another; and there is nothing in all its tidiness and fruitfulness to compare with the magnificent desolation of the Roman Campagna. The Florentine territory is a garden; its smile is irresistible; its variety inexhaustible. But it lacks grandeur. Those hills of Fiesole and San Miniato press upon it too much like a garden-fence; they shut you in, they take away your breath, they somehow dwarf the world around you. Florence strikes you as a place intended for what it has

always been—the head of a narrow territory, the capital of a petty Republic, of a Duchy, or little Grand-Duchy; not the queen of a world, or even of a great country. It is only at Rome, one would say, that there is room for a Metropolis; room within and without. Round the Seven Hills has always been the seat of Empire. There is waste ground unlimited to be reclaimed for all imaginable purposes; there are ruins of fallen power sufficient for a basis of boundless future greatness.

Florence was capital of the Italian Kingdom only for seven years, yet it is astonishing how much hay the thrifty Tuscan city managed to gather in during that short period of metropolitan sunshine. Had it continued to be the centre of national life for five or six years longer, daylight would have penetrated through the few clusters of narrow streets which are still stopping the way about the purlieus of the Mercato Vecchio and Nuovo; the Lung'Arno would have been finished on the left as well as on the right bank of the river; fresh water would have been brought in, and the city, whether or not it admitted of indefinite increase of area or population, would have left nothing to desire on the score of beauty, healthiness, and convenience.

How beautiful is Florence, and how lovely everything in it looks at this time of the year! October has just set in, but the heat is still intense, and the country is shrivelled and parched as it never was in July or August. The sun blazes out in all pomp

and majesty from a cloudless sky, and it takes more than all the length of an equinoctial night to lower the temperature for at least a few of the early hours of the morning. The season has been unusually late this year throughout the Continent, and even on the Alpine Passes not a single flake of snow has yet fallen. Strangers from the north bask in this broiling sun with a *salamandrine* delight, and fat old Russian ladies sit in the sweltering railway carriages wrapped to the chin in their thick furs, lest they should lose one particle of the precious heat for which they have been so devoutly longing.

"How beautiful is Florence!" is the cry of even those fat ladies, as emerging from all their swaddlings, they look from the carriage-window, and see the Dome, and the Belfry, and the Cascine woods, and the Fiesole hills.

Every stone within these old walls bears the stamp of genius; every house in the narrow streets has its legend; every spot beyond the stately gates boasts a panorama.

Gian Gastone, the last of the Medici, when plied by his confessor on his death-bed with gorgeous visions of the Eden which awaited him above the stars, meekly replied that "he was well satisfied with the Boboli Gardens." I suspect that there are not many well-to-do Florentines in a hurry for any better Paradise than their darling Val d'Arno; and the "good Yankee," who when he has turned shoddy into gold is rewarded by transmigration to the bliss

of Paris, seems now to have suffered another transformation, and deserting Meurice's in Rue Rivoli, musters here in great force in that genial hostelry, the name of which reminds him of Wall Street and Long Island—the New York, in the Lung' Arno.

This Arno however is the one blemish in this fairest of all fair cities.

It runs nearly dry for more than six months in the year, and notwithstanding the heroic efforts of the municipal authorities so to dam up its scanty waters as to convert them into a stagnant hot-bed of mosquitoes, in a prolonged drought as at present, its bed below the Ponte alla Carraia is a sea of mud, and reveals all the broken sherds and other abominations of which its waters are the receptacle. I thought I saw dead cats along with the rest; but as upon mentioning the fact to a fair resident of the Lung' Arno, I was assured that my eyes and eyeglasses had deceived me, I submit to the correction, and write down "every imaginable abomination," excepting "dead cats."

The rivers are the eyesores of the land throughout Italy; a traveller fresh from the banks of the Elbe at Dresden, of the Moldau at Prague, of the Main at Frankfort, Bamberg or Würtzburg, must feel his heart sink when he beholds all the desolation of the dry stony beds of the Taro near Parma, the Reno at Bologna, or the Magra at Sarzana, and he must thank his stars that the Sebeto at Naples, ashamed of the contemptible

thread of silver sand to which it owed its admission into the rank of the river-gods, hides itself out of sight, sparing at least the Neapolitans the trouble of "watering its bed," as the King of Spain had to do with the Manzanares, when he went out for a drive from the Alcazar to the Casa de Campo.

"What?" said Frederick Barbarossa to the Legates of the Roman people, when they intimated that his residence as a Roman Emperor should be the Palatine, "What? should I forsake the blue waters of the Rhine and the Meuse for the ooze of this fetid ditch which you call the Tiber? And Sir Walter Scott, or the "Anonymous" he quotes, wonders "where is the Scot who would hail the puny Tiber for the Tay?" And indeed the Italians have no words to rebut the taunts their foreign visitors allow themselves with respect to their wretched streams. Even the Ticino, Adda and Mincio, the children of the Lakes, at times almost suck the bosoms of their mothers dry, and, as to the Royal Po, it is a big, bullying, sandy torrent, always in the way when not wanted, and nowhere to be found when it could be turned to some purpose; of little use for irrigation, of almost none whatever for navigation.

It is a sorrow for a town to be without a river; but it is a disgrace for Florence to have such a river as the Arno. The long line of gaslights on its right bank forms a graceful curve, and the reflection in the water would have a magic effect if water there were.

I remember the time when, in June, on the recurrence of the festivity of John the Baptist, the space between the bridges was all ablaze with coloured lamps, and turned into a tilting yard for water-tournaments, the spectators crowding the quays and banks all round. I really believe the *festa* had to be discontinued only because the water fell shorter from year to year; but even in its best days that *illuminazione a giorno* only showed forth the shallow stream in its inky murkiness, giving it the appearance of one of Dante's *bolge* in all the glare of a Cremorne gala night.

With the Arno, as with other Italian rivers, there is no midway between too much and too little water, and something like fifty feet above the mire that trickles along the impurities of the bare bed in summer, they show you the line of the floods by which the land is almost periodically ravaged in the autumn or spring. There can be little doubt that the Arno and its brother rivers were not formerly subject to these extremes of drought and flood. Where is, in our days, the Arno which supplied the necessary fathoms to float the galleys in the Pisan harbour in the Middle Ages? Or what has become of the Tiber which bore up from Ostia the barges laden with Grecian columns and Egyptian obelisks? I become every day more convinced that it was the work of man which disturbed the economy of heat and moisture wherewith nature had blessed the Italian above all earthly climates;

and I am equally of opinion that the evil done by man may by man be repaired, and that the Arno, the Tiber, and the rest, might again be made a blessing to the land of which they are now the unmitigated curse. It was from the mountain-forests that the rivers derived their life-blood; and in those valleys where either the beneficent caprice of one man or the peasant's interested instinct has saved a few acres of the old chestnut and walnut groves, as at the Baths of Lucca, or on the slopes of Lake Maggiore, the green of the sward and the freshness of the pasture are proof against all the heat of the long summer day; the streams come brawling down their stony beds as pure and as cool as "the rills" which in Dante's time "glittered down the grassy slopes of Casentino, making fresh and soft the banks whereby they glide into Arno's stream," and the remembrance of which inflicted incessant torture on the souls burning with unquenchable thirst in hell-fire.*

What has robbed the Italians of the sweet waters to which their poet so lovingly alluded 570 years ago? Why, simply the ravages of their cruel axes among the primeval woods of the Apennines. And how can man bring back the hundred rivulets by which the Casentino fed the main course of the

* "Li ruscelletti che dai verdi colli
Del Casentin discendon giuso in Arno,
Facendo i lor canali freddi e molli."
INFERNO, XXX. 70.

Arno? Simply by re-planting the Apennine woods. It is a mighty enterprise, no doubt, and it requires time and capital, unremitting, intelligent, associated labour, and inexhaustible patience. But it is only on that condition that the Italians may enable themselves to call their country their own. In the lower valleys the streams are allowed to take as much of the level land as they list, and to carry their ravages up to the rocks, to the very bones of the hills. The stolid people think that, after all, the best way of putting an end to the vagaries of a torrent is to "let the spoilt child have its own way." And no doubt when there is nothing left for the stream to overwhelm and devour, there will be peace; but unfortunately a river brings fully as much as it takes away. It carries off good productive soil, and heaps up barren sand, and all the level of the plain is upset; the rivers rise above it on their obstructed beds; they break through their dikes and ramparts, and there ensue those terrific inundations of which we have had only too frequent instances in these late years.

Besides the re-planting of the mountain forests, which ought in our days to be the combined task of the emancipated Italian nation, it has long been the opinion of distinguished engineers that a remedy for the evils of drought and flood might be found in the formation of large reservoirs or artificial lakes in the upper region of the valleys. The Ticino, the Adda, the Mincio, and other Lombard streams

are more easily made to keep or leave their beds at man's bidding and for his convenience than the Po, the Doras, the Sturas, the Sesia, the Tanaro, and other Piedmontese rivers, precisely because the Lombard streams lose in a great measure their Alpine violence by subsiding into the smooth bosoms of their lakes; while the Piedmontese torrents, meeting nothing which may slacken their headlong fury, have usually too much water when none is needed and too little when every drop would be worth its weight in gold. And if it sometimes happens that both the lakes themselves and their emissaries overflow their banks, it is only because the streams of the upper valleys which feed them have long since broken bounds; were for instance the Ticino above Magadino, the Maggia above Locarno, and the other tributaries dammed up at various intervals in their native glens, at peace with the Lake Maggiore, there would be peace for the Ticino below Sesto Calende, and peace for the territory of Pavia, which depends on its water for its yearly crops.

Those who are familiar with the structure of most valleys in the Alps and Apennines must know that it would require neither great labour nor heavy expenditure to dam up the rivers at some narrow gorge in the uplands, and by the sacrifice of some barren hill slope to treasure up an immense wealth of water which is now suffered to flow unproductive, even if not mischievous, to the sea. Heavy rains

and rapid thaws will for ever be great scourges for Italy; but remedy to these evils, to a great extent, can be found in such contrivances as may at every step break the fall of the waters.

The Italians are skilful hydraulic engineers, and they deserve praise for some very splendid achievments by which they have lately drained marshes in the low lands. It is for them to see whether the formation of lakes in the mountains may not turn out as profitable an employment as the abolition of swamps in the plain.

It would be well, I think, if the Tuscans would venture on a first experiment by checking and husbanding, somewhere in the Upper Val d'Arno, in the rainy season, as much at least of the water as might at this time of the year float down to the sea the abominations—I will not say the "dead cats."—rotting under their noses, to the great distress of fastidious strangers, and to the grave detriment of Lung' Arno innkeepers.

CHAPTER III.

TUSCAN NOBLES.

Italian Aristocracy—Florentine Nobility—The Marquis Ginori—Plantations at Doccia—Progress of the Work—Its Difficulties—Its Results—Taxation and Industry—San Giovanni Iron-Works—A Day at San Giovanni.

It would be difficult even to the most rabid democrat to look without dismay upon the fate of the Italian nobility. The whole class is threatened with rapid extinction. Some of the finest houses, with glorious historic names, endeared to the country by recent patriotic deeds, seem bent upon falling by their own deliberate act. They yield to a disdainful feeling, which tells them that as they can no longer be as they were, they had better cease to be.

Affected by the French law abolishing the rights of primogeniture, these nobles have been sinking into helpless poverty, and all they now seem to aspire to is to hide their diminished heads, and die away in obscurity. There are some of the minor cities in Venetia and Emilia where the "Golden Book" was still, in the early part of the present century, an institution, and where the *Casino dei*

Nobili kept up its former lustre, an object either of superstitious awe or of mean envy to the long-trodden populace. At Parma and in other places, there were colleges for the nobility, some of them in high honour, where the scions of the great families were boarded and instructed apart from the mob which was rapidly invading the universities. Go and visit those cities now, and you will find everywhere liberty and equality rampant; the stewards of shattered estates or petty traders have become the great men of those places, and the aristocratic mansions, which no time can demolish, are being turned to the basest uses.

In some of the larger cities, as at Milan, the decay is gradual, for the bulk of great agricultural wealth resists dissolution, and some of the most substantial families strive to avert their fate by a variety of wise but not altogether unobjectionable contrivances,—by pinching niggardliness, by interested matrimonial alliances and by their limited fruitfulnes, or by the celibacy of their junior branches. But the house often falls by the very prop that should hold it up. The plant withers by lopping off its branches. And in many cases the last heirs eschew marriage altogether, wishing their names to perish with them. This happens especially in Piedmont, where the nobility were mainly a feudal and military caste.

But it is otherwise in those democratic communities where the nobles were simply patricians,

and where they originally rose by trade. In Florence there have been for centuries merchant and banker princes, men whose names are associated with all the glories of their ancient Republic, whose dwellings—marvels of the grand and severe style of mediæval architecture—still bear the escutcheons which were hung upon their portals in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, yet who do not disdain to turn a penny by selling wine or oil by the flask at some side-door of their mansions, as their fathers have done before them.

Not a few of these families—the Ricasoli, Peruzzi, Strozzi, Capponi, &c., hold up their heads among the highest and wealthiest; but I could hardly call to mind a better specimen of a working and thriving Italian nobleman than the Marquis Ginori.

There is no one in England unacquainted with the specimens of the china manufactory situated at Doccia, near Sesto, five miles from Florence, and which bears the name of the Marquis's family. It rose in 1735, at the same time with that of Sèvres, and it has been for several generations under the immediate management of each successive head of the house. The former Ginori however only carried on their trade as amateurs; they were proud to show that their private wealth could foster an industry which in other countries was dependent on royal patronage, and promoted it as a means of supplying employment to the impoverished population on their estates. But the present Marquis,

aware of the struggle in which every aristocratic family must be involved if it aspire to keep afloat, has given the ancestral establishment the utmost development; he has raised the number of workmen from 52 to 550; he has enlarged his workshops to four times their size, and is now meditating the addition of a new house and furnaces in the neighbourhood to enable him to meet the demands which his success at the Exhibitions of London, Paris and Vienna, besides one held this summer in his own premises, is crowding upon him.

My object however is not to enter into particulars of the Ginori manufactory, though I have recently visited it, and could compare its present condition with what it was at the time of my first visit in 1860, when I did my best to make it known. What took me lately to the Marquis's estate was a desire to view the result of the works undertaken by him for the *rimboscamento*, or replanting of woods in the mountainous districts above the china factory.

There is nothing, as the reader will have perceived, more interesting to me in Italy than this question of the physical reconstruction of the country, the necessary reaction against the savage destructiveness which stripped the slopes of the Alps and Apennines of their native forests, with utter ruin both to the mountain and the plain, and with grievous injury to the temperature and climate of the whole region.

The Ginori have been agriculturists as well as merchants from father to son; they have been foremost in draining and tilling the Tuscan marshes near Cecina; they have imported Merino sheep, Angora goats, and other breeds of small and large cattle; and they have engaged in extensive speculations connected with the coral and pearl fishery on the Mediterranean coasts. The husbandry of the Italians was however for a long time miserly and improvident, and the Ginori, like other landowners, enriched themselves by that inconsiderate felling of woods which have done irreparable mischief in Italy and in other Latin countries. The mountain sides above the Doccia manufactory suffered in an especial degree, partly because the factory itself required fuel on a large scale, and partly also because the neighbourhood of the capital offered a ready market for large and small timber. The destructive work which bared the mountains above Sesto and Calenzano, where the Ginori had their fiefs, was accomplished in a few years; the reconstruction by which those hill-sides may again be mantled with green must be the work of centuries. It is a task which might well have discouraged a man cast in a heroic mould. But the Marquis is better than that: he is a man of an active and practical turn of mind. He took little thought about the extent of success which might for a long time attend his exertions, but went to work steadily and manfully, determined to achieve whatever lay

within his power; and as it very generally happens, the results of his unpretending enterprise have exceeded his own and his neighbours' expectations.

I walked during my visit for several hours over long and steep ridges, only a few years ago as bare as my hand, and now teeming with millions of young oaks, ilexes, cypresses, pines, and many other varieties of hardy forest trees.

It will be easily understood that the mere sowing of seeds and planting of young shoots would be labour lost, unless the utmost pains were taken to hold up the crumbling soil and to check and guide the headlong course of the waters. The most immediate effect of the long improvidence of the Italians in the ruthless war they have waged against the woods has been to bring down all the soil from the hill-sides, leaving them in many places as bare, rugged and precipitous as walls. The new vegetation has therefore to spread and struggle upwards, just as ivy is made to creep up a wall; but even this is impossible till the rushing streams which work such great havoc in spring and autumn have been so divided and distributed, so turned and twisted, and, so to say, disciplined by a careful system of dykes and ditches, as to break their impetuosity and convert them from enemies into auxiliaries.

It is especially this preparatory work, a labour of infinite patience, that called forth my admiration as I went over the ground. The Italian peasantry

have an instinctive hydraulic talent peculiar to themselves, and are well fitted to cope with the difficulties of the task that is before them. What is often wanted is the landlord's capital, intelligence and perseverance—above all things, his frequent and continued presence; and it would be difficult to know how far the example so nobly set by the Marquis Ginori, by the Ridolfi, and a few others, will day by day be followed by many of the large proprietors; especially as Ginori himself acknowledges that he has to contend with that *Mezzadria* system, prevalent in many parts of Italy—an agreement by which the land-owner receives from his farmer as payment in kind one-half, or more or less, of the produce of the soil,—a system which has many advantages and many more inconveniences, but has this among the latter, that it gives the peasant a right of pasturage fatal to the growth of young wood.

To protect the rising plants from the destructiveness of stray flocks and herds is the main obstacle against which the replanting of forests has to contend in a country where the principle "Good fences make good neighbours" is imperfectly understood, and where forest laws, if they may be said to exist, are negligently administered.

That the Marquis Ginori has done much and proved that much can be done, is nevertheless undeniable; and his undertaking has been an inestimable blessing not only to his own tenants, but

to all the peasantry of the neighbourhood, who have been long accustomed to look upon the Ginori as a sublunar providence, and who, in the pinching winter months, have found profitable employment in the young plantations. Nor can there be the least doubt that the Marquis, by his outlay of capital upon a prospect of remote returns, has done at least as much real permanent good to himself as to his neighbours, for wood is an article of great and ever-rising value in this denuded country, and a landed estate like Ginori's, which for many years produced hardly a stick or a log, will soon yield a constant and growing income. What was very lately a bare mountain range is now covered over with a dense, verdant thicket; in ten years it will be a park or forest; and, taking into account the proximity of the spot to one of the most charming cities in the world, it would easily, if cut up into large lots for pleasure villa residences, rise to ten times its former value.

The Marquis Ginori however is not the only man of his class showing, by his energy and intelligence, how a noble may still maintain his rank among the most conspicuous bees in the social hive. As much or more than Ginori does at Sesto or Cecina is done at Meleto, where the Ridolfi have for many years and from father to son promoted agrarian schools and model farms; at Brolio, where Baron Ricasoli has raised the cultivation of his vineyards to the most flourishing condition; and on many

other estates where, if the owner is thriving, it is consoling to see his labourer better fed, clad and lodged, and higher placed in the scale of beings, than in any other parts of Italy, the richest districts of Lombardy not excepted.

And besides what each of these well-meaning nobles is able to achieve in his private capacity, much is also accomplished by many of them clubbing their means together and forming into liberal associations for their own and the public good. The Agrarian Society *(Dei Georgofili)* is, I believe, the oldest institution of that kind in the Peninsula; it rose under the auspices of Gino Capponi, Cosimo Ridolfi, and other worthies of the past generation, and like every other Italian enterprise of that nature in despotic times, it assumed a political character and exposed itself to suspicion and persecution; but it flourishes now under the sons and grandsons of its original founders; it more exclusively attends to its business, has ceased to be a sore in the eyes of the Government, enlightens the husbandman by its excellent publications, rewards him by medals and prizes in specie, and seconds the efforts of the Government in the encouragement of agrarian establishments of every description, amongst which the forestal school at Vallombrosa is giving satisfactory results.

The Tuscans take credit to themselves as being the gentlest and most amiable people in the world, but they certainly claim no more than they are fairly entitled to. They are decidedly the most patient.

The Florentines, for reasons which I shall presently examine, pay a house-property tax amounting to 39 per cent. of the rent of their premises; and Count Cambray Digny, a former Minister of Finance, in reporting on the Municipal Budget, throws out very clear hints that even that burden is not sufficiently heavy, but his townsmen must further execute themselves by voting an additional 10 per cent., when house property will pay the city very nearly one-half of its income.

On the other hand the revenue which the city collects from the *Octroi*, or duty on consumption, at the town gates, has raised the price of a halfpenny loaf to one penny, and the cost of all necessaries of life in the same proportion, so that a Florentine must manage to make half his former wealth meet the exigences of twice his former expenditure.

How the miracle is achieved and the difficulty got over is not easily explained, but this is certain, that the people here not only do not complain much of the hardship, but do not even mention it; that many of them seem not to know to what extent they are mulcted, or stoutly deny that the charge is as great as it really is; so that a stranger wishing to ascertain the truth of the matter must be at some pains to institute an inquiry, and wrench as it were the evidence from their unwilling lips.

The Florentines, to their praise be it said, far from uttering complaints rather crow over their miseries, and seek a remedy or a solace to the evil

where alone they know they can find it—in steady, intelligent and united work.

I went out one fine day this last April to San Giovanni, in the Upper Val d'Arno, at about one hour's distance on the railway line to Arezzo and Rome, to attend the meeting of the shareholders of a society who have established iron-works on the spot, with a view to turn to good purposes an extensive bed of lignite lying on the surface in the neighbourhood. Notwithstanding the wealth of her mines in the isle of Elba, and at the head of several Alpine valleys in Piedmont and Lombardy, and especially in the province of Bergamo, Italy still imports iron to the amount of thirty to forty millions of francs yearly (1,200,000*l.* to 1,600,000*l.*), the supply from the works at Follonica at Lovero, at La Perseveranza, and elsewhere, being inadequate to the demand.

Most Italian economists are out-and-out free-traders; but those among them who look on the bright side of everything, observe that Italy is falling back into protection in spite of herself, and that the very circumstances which have involved her in debt and flooded her with paper money have been in so far beneficial, that they have enabled, or indeed have compelled her to resort to branches of industry in which in normal conditions she had never thought she could compete with more advantageously-placed neighbours.

Paper money, they argue, that is, the 17 or 18

per cent. premium at which they have to procure gold, is injurious and even fatal to such industries as depend partly, or entirely, on foreign supply for their raw material or indispensable ingredients on a large scale; but it acts as a protective duty on manufactures exclusively employed on native produce; and as the country yields in this case both the iron and the combustible by which it can be forged, there is no reason why Italian iron-works may not supply as good iron wares as come from abroad, and at least as cheap, which result being attained, the additional charge upon all foreign production consequent upon the high price of gold must determine the consumer's preference in favour of native manufacture.

Upon the strength of this reasoning the Society at San Giovanni, with the Syndic of Florence, Ubaldino Peruzzi at its head, and mustering among its members the Corsini, Albizzi, Ginori, Ridolfi, Della Gherardesca, Della Stufa, and other noblemen, whose names, as I said, are always foremost in every useful and honourable enterprise, backed by the Fenzi and other banking houses, have subscribed a capital of six millions of francs (240,000*l.*), with which they have bought the bed of lignite at Capriglia, and laid the foundation of their iron-works at San Giovanni.

The combustible at Capriglia is not exactly lignite—it is simply wood which has been buried under alluvial soil from primitive times, and is only

partially petrified and carbonized. Its proper name among the geologists of the country is *Piligno*. It burns twice as fast as good Newcastle coal, and only gives half the heat; but as it costs considerably less than one-fourth of the price of coal, it not only is made to answer the purpose of the San Giovanni Iron-Works, but it is also sold far and wide all over the country for a variety of uses.

The bed at Capriglia extends over a surface of 150 hectares, and has an average depth of 29 mètres 40 centimètres. The Society reckon the lignite in their immediate possession at 10,000,000 of tons; but they could easily extend their purchase so as to own 40,000,000 tons.

The spot where the combustible is quarried is as unlike the region of English coal-pits as it is possible to imagine.

We were driven to it in trucks over a good tramway, a five kilomètres' distance from San Giovanni, preceded at the outset by the band of the town, and followed by a motley multitude with flags and flowers, the inauguration of the Iron-Works' Company being the occasion for great rejoicings to the population, to several hundred of whom it has been a godsend, giving them work and work's wages during the worst trials of last winter's famine.

From the bend of the valley we wound up amidst fertile hills, tilled with all the love and care peculiar to Tuscan husbandry, the landscape all round

telling of the presence of man's work up to the highest mountain summits. We came to a broad amphitheatre, where the surface had been cut into to the depth of 16 or 20 mètres, and from the perpendicular banks around which huge blocks of the combustible slid or dropped down with a succession of heavy muffled thuds. The lignite lies stratum upon stratum in various stages of carbonization, intersected here and there by thin layers of clay, often baked into the hardest red brick earth. The whole of the work is in the open air, and the labourers ply with that good will which the Italian workman invariably evinces under the stimulus of good wages. No less alacrity and greater skill and intelligence were exhibited at the iron-works which we subsequently inspected. As the whole capital, so the whole army and staff of labourers employed in the establishment are Italian, with the exception of a French director and overseer. The iron produced is of the best quality—mere bars and pig-iron for common trade use for the present; but the Company are confident that they will soon have the means for manufacturing rails for railways and plates for ironclads.

The members of the Tuscan aristocracy, who are most active in the furtherance of this undertaking, lend something more than their name and their capital to promote its success. They take, many of them, a direct and active part in the management of the concern, and the other day they

mustered in great numbers to listen to their chairman, Peruzzi, as he reported progress, and to inquire into the various departments, as the head-manager, Langer, showed them over the premises.

Most of the persons present were men familiar with each other from early youth, and bound together by a variety of common objects and interests. In every branch of industry one finds the Tuscan nobleman anxious to hold his own, sometimes in competition, but more often in partnership, open and avowed, with the plebeian. Hence a certain amount of intimacy and friendliness between persons of quite different rank, which dates from the days of mediæval Republican equality, yet which does not degenerate into impertinence or intrusiveness, and does not prevent the patrician from looking with complacency at his coat-of-arms, or from perusing with pride the scroll on which are written his forefather's titles, not only to their property but to their country's gratitude.

Nothing could be more surprising and nothing more pleasing than the joyous and amicable tone with which the shareholders of every rank sat down, *more Anglico*, to a very sumptuous yet sober dinner, where they listened to clever though somewhat elaborate speeches, and discussed the merits or speculated on the prospects of their enterprise with equal eagerness, displaying an acquaintance with the subject, and a general knowledge of matters

relating to trade which could only be grounded on long experience and extensive travel.

I looked at them, listened to them, and asked myself, "Are these Italians? Are these the same idle, frivolous people who only twenty years ago could not, because they durst not, speak of any weightier subjects than a Malibran's voice or a Cerrito's toes?"

And such a reflection has frequently occurred to me throughout my visit to the country of my youth.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CITY OF FLOWERS.

Florence—A Florentine of Florence—The Florence Flower-Show—Its Object—Ups and Downs of Florence—Florence in full Flower—The Central Market—The Flowers—The Opening of the Flower-Show—The King at the Flower-Show.

No place in the world seems better intended by Nature for a monster flower-show than this well-named "City of Flowers." For such an entertainment the second week in May has been appointed, and cards have been issued to all good men in Italy, and to all strangers whom the lateness of the spring may tempt to tarry on the sunny side of the Alps till the great heat sets in.

Florence is stoutly and earnestly bent on repairing the damage done to her municipal treasury by her abortive effort to do the honours of a capital to the new kingdom of Italy. Her brief promotion to metropolitan distinction and her too sudden relapse into provincial rank have been like a tile falling on the head of the Fair City, and she is driven to desperate shifts to fill up the deficit in a municipal budget which, I have been assured, equals and even

surpasses that of the whole Grand-Duchy of Tuscany in its later times. Like the May-Queen of song, Florence was made to wear her wreath for a day, and like the blossoms on it she seems doomed to wither away in a galloping consumption. The Corporation of the city had in 1864, almost in one day, to make room for the reception of 70,000 immigrants; and again in another day, in 1870, to look for the means of filling up the dwellings vacated by their emigration. By the time Porta Pia was stormed and Italy summoned to Rome, Florence was little better than a wilderness of half-finished buildings. The great problem how to find guests for her hundred new hotels, how to hinder the grass from growing in streets and squares which have been added to her former inhabited districts, presented itself on the very day the city was discrowned, and it has painfully awaited a solution ever since. Florence, it was well understood, could henceforth only live on her beauty and by her wits. She was to be a garden, a museum, and a school—the Athens of Italy and the pet of Europe; and it was to the extremely hard task of turning her to such uses that her municipal rulers dedicated themselves with that ardour of local patriotism by which Italians are distinguished from other men.

Italian syndics and assessors, or mayors and aldermen, are as a rule very exalted personages. Though springing from popular suffrage, the council is recruited among all that the city can muster most

distinguished and honourable by rank and fortune, as well as by intelligence and character; and the syndic who is appointed by royal nomination, but must be chosen among the members of the council, generally possesses the confidence both of his fellow-citizens and of the Central Government.

A very marked type of a first magistrate of an Italian community is the present Syndic of Florence, Ubaldino Peruzzi.

At the time of the fall of the Lanza Administration, in 1873, Peruzzi refused to enter into the new combination with his former colleague, Minghetti, because, he said, "his duties to Florence did not allow him time to attend to the affairs of Italy." Peruzzi is "an Italian, if you please, but a Florentine first," and "the shirt is nearer to the heart than the waistcoat." There is something in Florence that must be done, and cannot be done by any one but Peruzzi. A little of the conceit of the ancient *Priore* lingers about the heart of the modern *Gonfaloniere*. The King has broken through the statutes of the Supreme Order of the Annunciata to admit some of his *bourgeois* soldiers and statesmen into the aristocratic brotherhood; but Peruzzi, who as Home Minister was the very soul of the Cabinet of 1862, resigned his office without accepting even so small a distinction as the Cross of St. Maurice. Traditional family pride was at work there. The Peruzzi have been untitled patricians for these last 600 years; bankers

originally, with branches of their business all over Europe, till Edward III. of England broke them by repudiating his debt,* then magistrates of the Republic, and subsequently leaders of the Opposition under Grand-Ducal tyranny. The Ricasoli never consented to rise above the baronial rank; the Peruzzi remained plain Peruzzi: they were the De Rohans of Italy. Ubaldino was one of the Triumvirs who ruled at Florence upon the expulsion of the last Grand Duke, in 1859. He laboured with heroic zeal to bring about the annexation of Tuscany to Piedmont in the following year, by which transaction Florence sank from her station as a Tuscan capital.

Like many of his townsmen, Peruzzi foresaw the probability that his city might become the seat of the Italian Government, and only four years later his expectation was realized.

By the Convention of September 1864, the Italians virtually renounced their claims upon Rome, and engaged to transfer their Court and Parliament to the banks of the Arno. Peruzzi had a hand in that negotiation, and he reaped all the odium of it. He was supposed to be actuated by

* "In 1345, the Bardi at Florence, the greatest company in Italy, became bankrupt, Edward III. owing them, in principal and interest, 900,000 gold florins. Another, the Peruzzi, failed at the same time, being creditors to Edward for 600,000 florins."—HALLAM, *Middle Ages*, chap. ix. part ii., 'State of Society'; VILLANI, l. xii. c. 55, 87.

his predilections as a Florentine, and doubtless both he and his colleagues in the Cabinet had been embittered by the insidious enmity of the Piedmontese subordinates in their Ministerial departments. For several years no name was more heartily execrated in Turin than Peruzzi's. Peruzzi however was too clearsighted to imagine that the Italians would or could for ever give up Rome. He did not look upon Florence as the permanent capital, and he deemed it neither desirable nor advisable that she should aspire to such an honour. But there was no harm, he thought, in his townspeople making the most even of a transient opportunity. "Of all the fairest cities of the earth, Florence was already the fairest." Peruzzi determined that she should be made fairer still. Florence beautified herself for her short spell of metropolitan supremacy as for a bridal day. Her exaltation might be ephemeral; still the conquest of Rome was something vague and remote, and Garibaldi's indiscreet hurry seemed to put it off *sine die*. A French "Never" might not be enforced to the end of time; but it gave the Florentines an indefinite respite, say—a ten years' respite; and in that period the beauty of Florence might be made so perfect that the city could henceforth subsist on it alone, and not only dispense with sovereign rank, but even long to be rid of it. The Florentines were sick, or affected to be sick, of the noise and bustle, of the high prices, and of the uncouth dialects, the seat of

Government had brought with it into the Italian Athens. Many of the wealthy natives and of their sympathizing foreign visitors turned their backs upon the desecrated museum, now vulgarized into a political workshop. They missed their old repository of art and curiosities, their mart of cheap pleasure and genial gossip. They wished the King, the Chambers, and all the din of public life several hundred miles off.

They had their desire, but unfortunately several years sooner than they bargained for it. Rome was stormed in 1870, and the new inhabitants whom the Government had brought with it from the Po to the Arno were in a few months conveyed to the banks of the Tiber. The Florentines, unlike their Turin brethren, professed themselves highly delighted with their deposition. They exulted at the happy riddance of those metropolitan honours which had become "sour grapes" to them. Now the intruders were gone, they flattered themselves "they should be themselves again."

But alas! they soon found out that things could not again be as they had been. Only one-half of the work which was transforming a petty town into a great city was achieved. There were acres of unfinished houses, miles of unpaved and uncleared thoroughfares. The city was left to her own resources, with a reduced population and a diminished income.

It was under these circumstances that Peruzzi

stepped to the rescue of his birthplace. It was necessary, he thought, that nothing of what the capital had undertaken should be abandoned by the provincial town. He would have no Palmyra-like ruins about the Fair City. Whatever was in progress of construction should be completed; wherever foundations were laid, new edifices should arise. None of the schemes which had been entertained should remain undeveloped. Florence should have her magnificent market, her lovely drive on the hills (*Viale dei Colli*), her schools, her Philological Society, her bountiful supply of pure water—all that she had been promised. It should be made again what it was, but a hundred times more than it ever was—a repository of art and curiosities, a mart of cheap pleasure and genial gossip; the magnet of accomplished, polished, idle strangers.

Money must be forthcoming for all that no doubt; but Peruzzi, the descendant of bankers, is a financier, and he knows how to make the best of municipal resources. His sanguine, active, enterprising spirit set the duller brains of his assessors and council on fire. He inspired his countrymen with his own good confidence, and so filled them with eagerness for local interests as to make them almost indifferent to general politics. The Florentines have toiled with all other Italians to "make" Italy; but, that object being achieved, they are now only anxious about the reconstruction of their

city. It is not only Peruzzi who refuses a Ministerial Portfolio for a Municipal Gonfalone. Some of the very ablest and most distinguished Florentine Deputies—Carlo Fenzi, the banker, and Cini, the paper manufacturer, still in the prime of manhood—are numbered among the politicians retired from business. It is not merely because the patriotism of these men is exclusively local and municipal, or because they are flattered by the importance a more limited sphere of action gives them, that they thus sink the country in the mere province, and again the province in the city; it is also and mainly because social as well as political, private as well as public interests identify them with their townspeople, and give them an ascendency almost of a domestic character. Italy is their country, but Florence is their home.

This, as we shall see, in the long run and if it spreads very far, may be a calamity for Italy, but it is a wind that blows Florence good, for it will take no less than the combined energies of her children to save her, and what they do for their city will equally be done for the country; for after all it is not by a monster capital like London or Paris that Italy can live, but by her several cities, with their pleasing variety, with their special character and individual development.

It would be difficult to deny that the efforts of these illustrious citizens to break, if not to prevent,

the decline and fall of their town have hitherto been crowned with considerable success.

It must occur to many who have travelled a great deal, and have made extensive acquaintance, to wonder how it is that persons and things seem to change, while in their own conceit they "are always as they were." I had not seen Florence while it was the capital of Italy, and indeed not for thirteen years, and I am at some pains to analyze the impression the Fair City makes upon me.

There certainly is more life in her workshops; the trade in jewels, coral, marble or *pietra dura*, which was in my early days limited to the immediate precincts of Ponte Vecchio, has now invaded old and new streets almost all the way to the Cascine. The crowd at the Café Doney in the evening appears to be as dense as it used to be, at this season, in the palmiest Grand-Ducal times. The villas and villinos with which the new quarters about Piazza d'Azeglio and along Via Alfieri are studded, find tenants as soon as they are ready for habitation. Persons of distinction from the North of Italy have forsaken the homes they had in their own provinces, and manifest no intentions of quitting the quarters they took up when Parliament or Government business first brought them here. Of the English and American visitors whose stay in public or private Florentine residences is indefinitely prolonged, it would not be easy to tell the number. It is suggested that some of these do not belong to

the same class for whom the old Grand-Ducal Court had so much charm; but whatever their rank may be, their money is scentless in the nostrils of their landlords, and their presence contributes to impart to the town that bustle which it seems so natural to interpret as prosperity.

The people here, as all other people, complain of hard times; but their theatres, dull as they are, draw crowded audiences, and at the Cascine on a Sunday afternoon the display of equipages, silks and other finery has suffered little, if any, visible abatement.

Prices however, as I have observed, are high, and the hotel omnibuses often come back from the station as empty as they went there. Something to bring grist to the mill must be contrived. Florence must live on her historical and artistical capital. A centenary of the birth of one of her worthies, or of the death of another, is sure to turn up in need. The year before last there was the translation of the body of Ugo Foscolo from his lowly grave at Chiswick to his sumptuous monument in Santa Croce. Next year they will contrive a grand anniversary in honour of Michael Angelo. For this year they make shift by the great Flower-Show which is to "inaugurate" the opening of the new San Lorenzo Market.

It is curious for thinking minds watching the chain of events to see how present effects may be referred to remote causes. The promoters and

managers of this day's festivity are Peruzzi the Syndic, the Municipal Council, and the Royal Horticultural Society of Florence; but its real original authors were Cavour, Garibaldi and the late Emperor Napoleon. Cavour and Garibaldi united the kingdom of Italy; Napoleon chose Florence for its capital. The city exhausted her finances in her natural eagerness to raise herself to a level with her new station. Among her heaviest expenses was the construction of a magnificent central market. To defray the cost of the market without too great a strain on the overtasked municipal resources, it was deemed advisable to "raise the wind." To obtain this intent it became expedient to gather together a crowd of Italian and foreign visitors. To bring these in, it was necessary to make the city more than usually attractive. Hence the happy scheme of inaugurating a building intended for the sale of the fruits of the earth by a fifteen days' monster show of its flowers.

So notable a contrivance of ingenuity as this univeral flower-show could not fail to meet with success. The hotels of Florence have hardly ever welcomed so many guests on any previous occasion. The city has never borne so animated and joyous an aspect. The City of Flowers is sweet with all the world's fragrance. This is May be it remembered, and the Valley of the Arno, clad in its bridal finery of a moist spring, is in itself a garden of un-

matched luxuriancy. Had nothing but the produce of Tuscany, nothing but that of the gardens within the city walls come to muster, the eyes of a flower-fancier would have enjoyed such a feast as might have been considered sufficient repayment for the trouble of many a hundred miles' journey. In the Torrigiani garden, in those of Corsi Salviati and other Florentine patricians, in those of the Russian residents, Demidoff and Boutourlin, nature and art could keep such a gala day as might well maintain the reputation of a place which the flower-goddess chose for her darling abode. Indeed, the nursery-men and seeds-men of the place and neighbourhood were determined that the whole city should be a flower-show. All along the streets, especially those leading to San Lorenzo, the side-walks, the shop-fronts and the walls are lined with such a display of garden-bed and green-house rarities as makes one wonder what he may expect to see by going further. And what is not alive with flowers is all gay with flags—those Italian white, red and green flags which seem contrived to harmonize with all that is bright and lovely in nature's own garb.

I spent several hours yesterday, Sunday, within the building where everything was being made ready for to-day's ceremony.

The Central Market itself is well worth a visit, and will be one of the lions recommended by Murray in all his new editions of the 'Handbook for Central Italy.' I must not be asked how many

millions of Italian lire the building cost. I have seen the Quincy Market in Boston, and stood a twelvemonth ago within the handsome Crystal Palace which Sir John Peter Grant, Governor of Jamaica, wafted across the ocean ready made, for the benefit of butchers, greengrocers, poulterers and game-dealers at Kingston. Those and many others I could name are mere markets—spacious, airy, sweet rows of stalls, more or less admirably answering the purposes for which they were reared. But this affair in Via Chiara, near San Lorenzo, was to be a market for Florence—a market for Italy. Like everything Italian, it must be monumental—it must combine all that Roman magnificence and Tuscan taste could contrive; and its usefulness, if not marred by its beauty, must at least be made subservient to it.

The market rises on the ruins of one of those labyrinths of hovels, not a few specimens of which are still to be seen in Florence, as in most Italian towns, through which civilization has to strike its way with a golden axe. The streets have been widened around it on all sides, and two handsome rows of buildings flank the market on the left and right as you step into it at the main entrance in Via Chiara, leaving on either side an ample space, which with the lofty colonnades running along the ground floor of the two buildings must be considered as accessory to the market, and is meant to relieve it of many unseemly and unsavoury branches of its trade. This

open space is now cut out into flower-beds, and the porticoes are all ablaze with the gorgeous hues of the hardiest flowers. The main edifice itself is a vast green-house and hot-house for more delicate and exotic plants; for these latter, separate compartments at various degrees of temperature have been provided.

The market is a large building of white stone ribbed with iron, of prodigious solidity and loftiness, divided into three main compartments, as grand and spacious as the nave and aisles of a minster, with the roof raised lantern-wise for several mètres above the walls, supported by iron stanchions, and so glazed as to admit whatever air may be needed on all sides.

Anything cooler or brighter cannot be easily imagined; and though considering how much more money has been lavished upon it than the mere sale of greens and cabbages required or warranted, it must be described as "a folly," no one can deny that it is a "thing of beauty"; and to the city which already boasts the Loggia dei Lanzi and the Orsammichele, the style of which equally transcended their original purposes, it will be "a joy for ever."

In the centre of the main compartment there is a fountain, the soaring jet of which reaches the very ceiling, a white pillar of foam sparkling in the sun—a cooling and gladdening sight, not unlike the one that glances from the midst of the green on the square before the Turin Railway Station, or that

which cheers the traveller upon stepping out into the Piazza di Termini, as he enters Rome.

Round the fountain and round its large marble basin clusters of shrubs are arranged, somewhat on the plan on which similar beds are laid out in the centre of the Sydenham Crystal Palace.

Conspicuous in that blaze of colours, and first to attract the beholder's attention, is a whole parterre of azaleas, exhibited by the Marquis Della Gherardesca, not to be matched by anything of the same kind that ever appeared at any former show.

I am not a florist any more than I am a fiddler, and am not sure that my enjoyment both of flowers and tunes is not all the greater by reason of my profound ignorance of every term of botany and every note of music. More extensive and possibly more gorgeous exhibitions of flowers there may have been. Indeed I have seen English and German critics walking from bed to bed and from house to house, sniffing very knowingly and very superciliously; but again I have spoken with many of the exhibitors and jurors of all countries, and especially Scotch, Dutch and Belgians, and they were all unanimous in assuring me that the show exceeds in beauty and interest anything they have ever seen before.

The appearance of the Exhibition building to-day differed not a little from the aspect the same edifice bore yesterday. Instead of the few thin groups of exhibitors, *rari nantes*, lost in the silent

space, as they scanned each other's productions, and took notes in their memorandum-books, instead of a few porters and labourers putting the last touches to arrangements which hardly seemed to require any finish, we had to-day at an early hour fine samples of whatever rank and beauty the European and other nations can boast.

At 11 A.M., the hour appointed for the opening, a number of notables, among whom were statesmen and ambassadors with galaxies on their breasts, were huddled together on the steps at the entrance, the ladies themselves doing "Peris at the gate of Paradise." Punctual to the minute state coaches with scarlet royal liveries drove up with the King and his suite, announced by the *fanfare*, and the shouts and plaudits of the mob outside.

The weather was by no means favourable. A keen and raw wind blew from the north-east, and swept through the open portals all across and to the very centre of the building. The black swallow-tailed coats and white ties which the company were bidden to put on had to be hidden (stars, crosses and all) under paletôts and comforters—think of that in Central Italy and on the 11th of May!—and the King himself, who was dressed in plain clothes and round hat, wore his thick overcoat of plush, and was liberal of his bows to make up for his very pardonable reluctance to remove the hat from his bald head.

Victor Emmanuel was in his usual health and

good humour, but the bleak weather visibly affected his complexion and deepened the lines which fifty-four winters have drawn on his bluff countenance. He was received at the outer gates by the Syndic and by the Marquis Niccolino Ridolfi, the President of the Horticultural Society; their ladies awaited His Majesty inside the building.

Inside the building, opposite to the entrance, and behind the great fountain, there was a screen formed by evergreens which mantled the wall almost to the ceiling, and made a lovely frame to an artificial grotto, into which fell a plashing cataract in many a trickling rill, and in front of which was spread a thick carpet, with a few arm-chairs ranged in a semicircle round a royal fauteuil of very modest pretensions.

Here the ceremony of inauguration took place—a dull affair though not long; a few droning words, a few bows from the King, presentations, congratulations, and all was over.

The King did not sit down nor tarry on the spot, but walked up a winding staircase leading to a platform above the grotto from which he could survey the gay scene and the well-dressed and good-looking multitude.

Between the nave and the aisles of the grand edifice there rose groves of tall evergreens, gracefully waving their branches above the beds of azaleas, geraniums, fuchsias and calceolarias with which acres of the floor were studded.

In the aisles to the right and left were handsome pavilions, raised at the expense of the exhibitors of the rarest plants. The constructors of these tents had not been unmindful of what was expected of an artistic people. Above the entrance to most of them were paintings of birds, cupids and other devices, delicately executed; in the space between them fountains with groups of statuettes and statues, among which I noticed the model in plaster of a Triton by a young artist named Morelli, which if cast in bronze would be admired as a masterpiece.

At intervals along the walls there arose tall tapering pines of tropical species, almost miraculously hiding their roots in small ornamental vases altogether out of proportion with their stately growth. Through the windows one could see little forests of firs, ferns and other trees, with here and there orange groves laden with their golden fruit.

Nothing could be more remarkable than the neatness and freshness which pervaded all things. In all those many bouquets and baskets of flowers, arranged in the most fanciful shapes, the most fastidious eye could not have detected a fallen or a crumpled leaf. It was a triumph of art aided by consummate science. I noticed tulips from Holland as full of life and beauty as they were when cut from their stems more than a thousand miles off.

A few minutes later the King came down from the platform, and walked through the crowd down one and up the other aisle, ending his progress at the back entrance, where his carriage was awaiting him.

The whole ceremony only took him about half-an-hour. For whomsoever else the show may be intended, the King for his own part had enough of it. But when is it that kings see much of anything? A king must travel like a portmanteau —be whirled at express speed from place to place, walk through miles of painted canvas and carved stone in national galleries, scamper along rows upon rows of stalls at international exhibitions, trot over endless avenues in royal and imperial parks, gallop past the ranks of whole hosts at reviews, and stand before numberless churches, palaces and other monuments of world-wide renown. No leisure afforded to look and to linger or to breathe — nothing but a vast moving panorama, a medley of dissolving views, a swarming of buzzing bees. And then the addresses and the *salaams* of the diplomatic body! There may not seem anything very formidable in those words "the diplomatic body"; but consider of how many limbs that body is composed, and imagine how refreshing it must be to return bow for bow to all and each of them—all of them, from the prince representative of the Czar of all the Russias to the linen-draper Consul-General for

Guatemala, or the grocer *chargé-d'affaires* for Costa Rica!

What may be Victor Emmanuel's recollections of the Florence Flower-Show? What will he be able to tell of the palm, *Phœnicophorium Sechellarum*, from the Torrigiani Garden, or of the *Pritchardia Gaudichaudiana* and *Pritchardia Martiana*, exhibited by Linden of Brussels, or of the *Dracenæ*, —*Dracæna Realis*, *Gloriosa*, &c., sent hither by Messrs. Veitch of London? Not even perhaps as much as myself, as I have at least brought home the names.

CHAPTER V.

THE LAND OF ART.

The Duomo of Florence—Italian Art—Tuscan Art—Foreign and Italian Art—A Tuscan Villa—A Tuscan Lady—Italian Talk.

I CAME back to Florence three days ago after a six weeks' absence, and the first sight that struck me was the boarding in the Piazza del Duomo, left still as it was when the corporation of the city resolved "that their monumental Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore should at last have its façade."

That cathedral, the wonder of the world, the master-piece of Arnolfo and Brunelleschi, and without contradiction one of the three great churches in Italy—so chaste and solemn inside, such a marvel of stone-lace outside — was, like many other edifices of the Middle Ages, suffered by those brave old Florentine Republicans to stand incomplete, lest their great-grandchildren should have reason to repeat Alexander's complaint that "their fathers had left nothing for them to do."

That Duomo was the achievement of free Florence, and to lay hands on it might have seemed desecra-

tion to the Florentines enslaved by the Medici and the Lorraine princes.

But better days arose at last, both for the city and the country, and among the first aspirations of the emancipated people there was a re-awakening of their veneration for their great mediæval structures, and a desire to have them carefully restored and finished. An Englishman, Mr. Sloane, led the way towards the erection of the façade of Santa Croce, which has already received its inauguration; and at the time of the King elect, Victor Emmanuel's triumphal entrance into the city, in 1860, it was decreed that the completion of the façade of Santa Maria del Fiore should also be immediately proceeded with, the King himself heading a subscription to that effect.

The Germans, in the same manner, acting on a similar impulse, had equally determined that the finishing of their minster at Cologne, on the roof of which the crane had been rusting for ages, should be considered as a national undertaking, and that it should keep pace with every effort made towards the revival of their imperial greatness. That Babel-like structure, so long the emblem of the dispersion and confusion of the German tribes, should now record the consummation of their reunion. And the Germans have been as good as their word.

Not so the Italians. The Florentines went no further than raising a boarding before the doors of their Duomo, and the façade stripped of the ignoble

plaster which disguised it remains, after fourteen years in its unseemly nakedness, a monument, if not of impotence, at least of infirmity of purpose.

I cannot say whether this arises from insufficiency of funds, or from the difficulty of agreeing upon a design harmonizing at the same time with the severe character of the church itself, with its gay Campanile by its side, and with the quaint Battistero which faces it. A very creditable model of the new façade, chosen from among a crowd of rival performances, and to the author of which a medal was adjudged, may be seen in one of the upper apartments of the Palazzo Vecchio, now the Town Hall; but even that does not seem to come up to the ideal of the fastidious Florentines, and the enterprise is likely for the present to go no further. The scheme, of course, has not been abandoned, and the boarding is there, a witness that something is to be done; but the boarding may rot, and the façade is one of the works I have little hope to see, I will not say finished, but even commenced in my lifetime. The Florentines, it must be avowed, have not been unmindful of many of the monuments which make their city a mediæval museum. The façade of Santa Croce and the porticoes of Santa Maria Novella have been completed in the best taste and with a reverent attention to the original designs. The same may be said of the Bargello, Orsammichele, the Palazzo Ferroni, and other time-honoured structures in that style. It is neither the

will nor the skill that is wanting here. What appears to be at fault is merely the power of initiative. Veneration for the past seems to cripple the faculty for new conceptions, and the façade of the Duomo unfortunately is one of those undertakings which require a stretch of creative genius.

Is there then a falling off in the inventive powers of the Florentines? Is Art languishing in this gifted land which was once its cradle?

This is one of those painful subjects to which it is dangerous to allude; it is a point on which an Italian and a stranger from any other country cannot easily be brought to agree. Artists, we are told, are one nation, and Italy is their country. Every house in Rome which was not a convent or a prince's palace was a studio (I speak in the past tense, because I allude to the Papal city, and things are rapidly changing); every third man who was not a priest or monk was a painter or a sculptor. The country was left a fallow, and the town an "*immondezzaio*" or dust-heap, for the gratification of the lovers of the picturesque; you breathed taste and genius in the air as you inhaled the marsh fever; and if a few months did not make you an artist, it made you a connoisseur and art patron. To go to Rome to learn his craft was for an artist a duty; to linger on the spot, to live and die there, was very frequently his choice and his fate. The English City of the Dead, near Caius Cestius's pyramid, the greenest spot in Rome, is mainly an

artists' pantheon; there they lie by hundreds, men from York or Ulster, from Ayr or Devon, from Providence or Chicago, side by side with Germans and Scandinavians, Northern men and Protestants.

Florence as a land of art is less cosmopolitan; it is even less national. Its school was at all times municipal. The city is proud of its achievements, jealous of its style. Artists from foreign countries come to Florence, but they are less at home in it. The Florentines bore the palm once, and are less friendly to the outsiders who come to dispute it. Though Art is a guild, and artists should be brethren, blood has its antipathies and schools have their prejudices. Between the native Italian and the foreign artist there is not exactly ill-will, but neither is there much friendly intercourse. The Italian, in his Transalpine brother's opinion, lives in and by his *Cinquecento;* his hand has not forgot its cunning, but his mind is in a great measure materialized; he studies hard, yet works feebly; he strives to acquire powers which he does not know how to turn to good purposes; he attends to execution till he seems to lose the power of conception. The Italian artist, as judged by foreign critics, seldom rises above the rank of a good copyist.

On the other hand, the Italian will not easily admit that a Northerner has any idea either of drawing or of colouring. He may allow a German or an Englishman greater industry, more exten-

sive knowledge, more inventive audacity; but the "organ" of colour, like that of tune, only comes into life, or at least into full development, south of the Alps. The Briton, Gaul or Belgian may take away the Italian's custom, he may rob the native of the sun of foreign patronage, but not of that knack of imitation of nature which is the Southern man's birthright.

It is not easy for an Italian to rise above conceit and prejudice, nor easy for a foreigner to avoid misappreciation and injustice. Genius speaks through Art as through a language; and we all know how long a familiarity it requires to bring people thoroughly to understand each other's idioms.

It would be vain to deny that Italian art has not shown to great advantage at the London, Paris or Vienna Exhibitions, and that the traveller who frequents the studios at Florence, Rome or Naples comes off with something very like chill disappointment at his heart. Art, like nature, has its fruitful and its barren seasons. Brain crops depend on political, social and moral circumstances, precisely as field harvests are affected by atmospheric conditions. Italy was great in art when she was great in everything else—when she was healthy and wealthy, and unwearied in land and sea enterprise, or rather just when with her loss of freedom her energies began to abate, and the stirring spirit which had placed her at the head of European thought, denied all other free scope, sought a new

field for exertion in the cultivation of the beautiful. From that time Italian art has lived on its capital. It became reproductive, and therefore gradually unproductive. There is still immense executive power among these Florentines. Their instinct for the beautiful is always marvellously true. The trade in cameos, in mosaic, in coral, in glass beads and other artistic trinkets both here and at Rome, at Naples and Venice, is far more brisk now than it ever was, and there is still something in it that lifts it above the dead level of common manufacture. Still it is only art-manufacture, and in other respects Art has declined in proportion to the means employed to advance it. There are academies and schools of design in every town in Italy. Young beginners are supplied not only with instruction, but even with pencils, brushes, colours and canvas free of expense. But the result of all this encouragement seems to be to dishearten true genius, and to smooth the path for damnable mediocrity.

We were talking about these things last evening, as we sat on the terrace of one of the most unpretending yet most cosy and home-like villas near Florence.

The heat in town was unbearable, and most of the Florentines were away at the baths. A few of the most fortunate, however, have country houses as well as town residences, and some of them are known to be equally "at home" in either.

It was to one of these that I drove with a friend yesterday at sun-down. We travelled along the upper valley of the Arno by an easy ascent through fields of unrivalled verdure and luxuriancy; we pulled up at a wide-open gate, walked through dimly-lighted halls and passages, issued forth into a garden, and were led over winding paths to a green platform pitched high above the house and the surrounding country, from which we commanded an extensive view of the Val d'Arno with the Florence lights gleaming in the distance.

We arrived at the spot just in the gloaming, and were at some pains to distinguish the various groups of the assembled company, whose voices had reached us long before we alighted from our carriage, as they broke, loud and lively, through the stillness of the evening.

The lady of the house, the "Donna Sola," the one female entertainer of a large male party, according to the general custom of the country, quitted the group which pressed around her, and came to us with radiant face and with hands outstretched, as if our company were the very thing she had been longing for to make her happiness complete, and as if we were the guests she delighted to honour above all others.

The cordiality was as charming as the courtesy was consummate. I had not seen the lady's sunny face nor heard her ringing voice for more than a score of years; but nothing seemed changed either

in her personal appearance or in the heartiness of her manners. Many, I am sure, will easily recognize our hostess from this description, without any necessity on my part to give her name. She is the lady of whom a distinguished statesman said, that "he had travelled with her from Florence to Paris, that she had been talking to him day and night throughout the journey, amusing him all the time, and never uttering either a silly or an ill-natured remark."

As I groped my way along the terrace under the lady's guidance, I recognized old acquaintances and was introduced to several strangers, but was soon on the same footing of familiarity with old and new friends.

It could not take long to "break the ice" in that warm and genial Italian atmosphere. People come together in this country with a frankness and confidence formerly carried even to rashness. Long accustomed to political oppression, they never submitted to social restraint when "covered," that is, safe from *espionnage;* in trusty private intercourse the Italians were even in the worst of times extremely unreserved.

The political freedom which has lately set in was not likely at once to seal their lips. There is a mutual forbearance and indulgence to each other's opinions that allows their interchange of ideas the utmost expansion, and leads their discussions to rapid results. There is no doubt that

intellectually, owing to their habits and modes of life, the Italians live fast. They read little, but talk much; the small change of wit and knowledge circulates freely, and spreads far and wide. Deep thought and learning may be rare among them; but a certain polish and culture is to be found in social ranks in which it would be vain to seek it in more advanced communities.

Here however at my friend's villa, there were men of considerable attainments; a distinguished soldier and statesman who had for many years served his country with zeal and ability, though he still speaks Italian with a strong foreign accent; an historian and biographer whose works are as extensively read in English versions as in their original language; some veteran members of the House of Deputies whose voice and suffrage had no little weight in the transactions which led to the achievement of Italian unity; finally various professional gentlemen, scholars and students, young men who have seen little of old Italy, and have been brought out in full confidence in the high destinies of their emancipated country.

It is among these latter, I observed, that earnestness of thought and loftiness of purpose seemed to be most conspicuous. The men who made Italy are apt tacitly to acknowledge that their achievement was rather the result of good fortune than of any heroic exertions on their part. But those for whose benefit Italy was made, the rising gene-

ration, are aware that the country relies upon them, and upon them alone, for its development, for its social and moral regeneration. Several of the young men at the villa were—for Italians—great travellers; most of them were familiar with the language and literature of other countries. They all felt that Italy had been for centuries deprived of intellectual life, and that in the dearth of any literature of their own, she had too blindly depended for guidance on the writings of a nation "a little more than kin, a little less than kind."

The estrangement of Italy from France does not merely spring from the attitude the French chose to assume towards their south-eastern neighbours after the calamities of 1870. The Italians begin to be weary and ashamed of their long submission to French schooling. For centuries, but especially within these last eighty years, they either read nothing or read French. Nothing but French ideas make their way into the country; and it was only through a prism of French colours that Italy caught a glimpse of the Transalpine world. But the leadership of France, her democracy, her clap-traps of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," were found to have led the Italians far from the path which it was good for them to tread. Their cause was simply that of national independence. There was no reason why subversive political and social questions should be mixed up with it. The people here have little faith in republics or in universal suffrage. Had

there been any hankering after such delusions, the experiments of France and Spain would have exercised a sufficiently sobering influence. Since the occupation of Rome and the death of Mazzini, rampant democracy has lost ground. The Italians are certainly the most prudent politicians on the Continent, whatever one may think of their administrative abilities.

It was not with politics however that our lady friend at the villa was entertaining her guests. As soon as the little commotion caused by our arrival had subsided, she continued to hold forth in her own fluent manner, returning to the topic which we had interrupted. "No, General," she said, "I do not think art in Italy pines for want of patronage. Victor Emmanuel may not be a Lorenzo de Medici, nor Pius IX. a Leo X.; but are not English lords and Russian princes better than either? Are not there the exhibitions of South Kensington and Burlington House? Will you tell me that Transalpine purchasers are blind, or destitute of taste, or all leagued against our poor Italian artists? Have not our painters the same chance as our sculptors? Ask Maqui how much an English dealer gave for his 'Phryne,' or what Tantardini got for his 'Reading Girl,' or Monteverde for his 'Columbus.' Why cannot the painters do as much? I will tell you. Sculpture holds its own among us for the very reason that painting is losing ground, because sculpture in a great measure depends upon execu-

tion for success, and the deficiency in Italy lies in that creative power which has its sources in general national energies. When we shall have husbandmen and merchants, soldiers and sailors, when our men shall be men, our artists will have brains as well as hands. For the present they do not do men's work: they do not study, nor toil, nor think. Even such a man as Uffi, what is he but the man of the *one* picture?"

"It is so, even so, I am afraid," put in the old General.

"Aye, my friends," the lady went on, soon recovering breath, "and it is the same with our Literature."

Here there was a slight commotion among the groups; those farther from us drew up to hear, and a half-audible "Oh—ho!" proved that the subject came nearer to them.

"Why, yes," she proceeded, nothing daunted. "Why is it that we are neither read nor translated abroad? The last of our books that ever crossed the Alps was 'I Promessi Sposi.' We are too serious a people forsooth to write or read works of fiction; or if we do, we only dabble in historical novels—historical novels, do you hear?—a style of writing which began and ended with the Wizard of the North. Where are our social novels? Have we no domestic life, no character, no oddities, that may deserve portraiture? Are we not fit subjects for satire or caricature? I am sure we

all are, all of us. Then where are our Dickens and Thackerays?"

"But," some one meekly suggested, "the Theatre."

"Our Theatre is not quite dead, it is true. We have a new play now and then, humorous, highly moral, sensational. But, I ask you, are these plays Italian? Are they mirrors of ourselves, or are they not the reproduction of a foreign life—foreign to us if indeed it belongs to any country in the world—an ideal, artificial, conventional life, as cosmopolitan as the *table d'hôte* at our hotels? If I want an Italian farce I go to Gianduia or San Carlino. The only genuine Italian play is 'Monsu Travet.'* Our stage is municipal or it is nothing. Even here in Florence no one dares write as he talks. We have dialects but we have no language. We have only a *lingua scritta, lingua morta.* When we write prose we are walking on stilts; when we write poetry we go up in a balloon."

"Capital!" we cried all round, clapping our hands. "You hit hard, Donna Emilia, but it is true."

"We have lost ground in everything, even in music. We have had no operas since the 'Barbiere' and 'Sonnambula.' We set aside even 'Norma' for

* A play by Vittorio Bersezio, very cleverly setting off the trials and miseries of a poor Piedmontese *employé*. The name of the protagonist is now applied to the whole suffering class of minor placemen.

'Tannhäuser' and 'Lohengrin.' Our prima donnas shriek when they would sing; our tenors are always out of tune. We feel savage when we are taunted and reviled on these subjects in foreign newspapers, but is it not the truth? Are not our composers and singers driven from the stage? And do we ever hear an Italian piece even in our own concerts?"

"It is all the fault of those cursed politics," observed the General, only half in earnest. "Did not somebody say, that if the Italians wished to be men they should cease to be fiddlers? Supply in every branch, my dear lady, never fails to keep pace with demand. We have just as much art and literature as we want, and precisely of the quality we require. If we wish to read, have we not the newspapers? And does not the press of Milan alone send 40,000 copies of its daily sheets broadcast among a population of 250,000 souls? And are we here at Florence behindhand? Our papers may not be worth much—there may be little to read in them, and nothing good; but some one buys, and that somebody may be presumed to read. And were there only the telegrams, would not that be better than the Balzac, and Eugene Sue and Paul de Kock that used to lie on our ladies' drawing-room tables in our youth?

"We are progressing, my dear lady, do not doubt it. Men may do very well without pictures, but they must have houses, and must pay the men who build them. There you have a branch of art

that cannot be said to languish from want of patronage. It is especially here at Florence that one may judge of the degree of excellence attained at the present day by domestic architecture."

"Precisely so," said Donna Emilia; "we have a vast amount of masons' work going on; but would you call that architecture? We have an old style of building here which has no equal in the world. You know it. It rose at the time in which the old turreted and machicolated rural fortalice gave way before the plain city mansion, and its best specimens may be seen in the Strozzi, Pitti and Riccardi Palaces. It is our own Tuscan style, massive and stately, awing the beholder by its severe simplicity. Look at the Altoviti, Ginori or Martelli Palaces: are you not struck with the easy yet marvellous harmony and consistency of all their parts; the heavy cornices, the well-measured spaces between the floors and windows, the span of their horse-shoe Tuscan arches? Can you have patience with the gim-crack houses in the Lung' Arno Nuovo, or in the Piazza dell' Independenza?"

"And would you have all New Florence made up of fac-similes of the Martelli, Ginori and Altoviti mansions?" retorted the General. "Every generation must build its own houses, my dear lady, and I praise the English, whose squares and terraces are warranted not to stand more than ninety-nine years. Elegance of design must yield to the exigencies of domestic arrangements, and I never pass

the Palazzo Strozzi without glancing at the flues of the stoves projecting from the walls, possibly because the builder had never heard of a chimney, or fancied that there never could be cold weather in Tuscany. Your new houses in Florence may not be patterns of perfection, but what would you think of our Isole at Turin, or of the new blocks about the Via Nationale in Rome? *Que voulez-vous?* Modern houses are not built to look at, but to live in, and would to heaven we could inhabit them with safety."

"Well, General," the lady insisted, "I will give up the town houses, but where could you find worse staring, lumbering rural residences than in the country? Who can have patience with our tall, square, clumsy *palazzino*, with our many-coloured, grotesque, baroque *villini?* It is true that English settlers here outdo us in their outrageous exhibition of bad taste. But is not this the land of Art, and ought we not to set a better example?

"Then consider our public monuments! Think of your late friend, General Fanti's statue in Piazza Cavour! or, by the way, think of the Cavour Monument Dupré has just uncovered at Turin! Think of that, do! A design furnished by the best of Italian sculptors, to honour the memory of the greatest of Italian statesmen, the subject given out to public competition, regardless of expense, and see the result! Can anything be more shocking, more

disgraceful? That gross, naked figure of a man who never stripped, except for his bath; that wanton, naked female clinging to his knees, those absurd allegories at the base! Bah! I really believe that even Independence and Unity are dear at the price of so disastrous a falling off in our artistic pretensions!"

"We must recover our birthright even if we renounce our mess of pottage, my dear lady," the General replied. "The wind of late has not been blowing propitious to the growth of public monuments,—see the Wellingtons, the Clydes, the Peels in London, if you wish for consolation. See the July and other Columns in Paris, or, by the way, see the famous Column of Victory in the Thiergarten at Berlin. I have just come back from that odorous city on the Spree, and I do think that Sedan is already more than fully avenged. I had always a horror of a sprawling figure at the top of a pillar, but what has been done in Berlin has effaced from my memory whatever had seemed offensive in all my former experience. Conjure up the idea of all that is staring, glaring and outrageously incongruous, and you will hardly come to a fair estimate of the "Sausage Column" which is to send down the great deeds of arms of the German nation to endless posterity. The statue itself, big as it is, if one could only see it, would not be so very bad, nor are some of the groups in the bas-reliefs at the base ill designed or executed; but oh! the scheme

of the whole monument, its proportions, the oddity of the column, rising stumpy and clumsy, out of a colonnade—a bronze column out of a stone colonnade—the absurdity of those cannon clustering in rows like Havannahs or Manillas round a cigar-stand, the monstrous unfitness of the parts to the whole, and of the whole to the parts, the total disregard of sense as well as of taste—monstrous! shocking, saddening, provoking!

"Do what she may, Germany will never be rid of this new, grim and hideous Irminsaul. There are sins in taste a nation will commit and which will hang like a stone round its neck, a reproach and an unavailing remorse to the end of time. Who shall ever rid Hyde Park Corner of its Commendatore in 'Don Giovanni'? or how can Berlin ever hope to see the trees in the Thiergarten grow so high and so thick as effectually to hide the dreadful pillar from sight, and obliterate every path that may lead the unwary stranger to the foot of it?

"It is like a snub-nose, a hare-lip, or any other deformity in a man's face. It is a blemish, an eyesore to your friends and to yourself when you look in the glass. But it was a gift of step-mother Nature. It is for you to have and to keep, to sit down to table with it, to lie in bed with it, and to go about with it from your cradle to your grave."

The General made us laugh, and in his account

of the egregious failure of the Berlin work the ill success of the Turin performance was soon forgotten. The company broke up late, and after all that had been said, with the many who went asunder, the conviction of the perfect validity of Italy's title, "Land of Art," remained probably as deeply rooted as it ever was.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HUNDRED CITIES OF ITALY.

Italian Cities—The Past—The Present—Causes of Decline—Spectre Cities—University Towns—Popular and Academical Education—Parasitical Institutions—Masters and Pupils—Prospects of Universities—Prospects of University Towns.

It is interesting to see how much of Old Italy is dying in order that New Italy may live. The throne of Victor Emmanuel had to be built on the ruins of five or six royal, ducal, grand-ducal and vice-regal seats. The rise of his metropolis may and perhaps must determine the fall of half-a-dozen capitals. This is no unprecedented phenomenon in the country. Italian cities are used to die; and they know how to keep up the appearances of life in death. It takes an "unconscionable time" to kill them. I have lately visited Siena, Pisa, Lucca, and other provincial towns in Tuscany, and am now at Parma, no unfair specimen of a city of Emilia. All these places and many even of lesser note, had either in remote or in very recent times an individual independent existence. They were the heads of sovereign States, petty Republics for a period; then Duchies, or as some were styled,

Grand Duchies; some, like Pavia and Ravenna, were royal or imperial seats. They were the remnants of the old Roman world broken to atoms; they are now being again cast together into a new political and social unit.

Every Italian city in the Middle Ages had its greatness circumscribed by the extent of its rural territory. The main bulk of the country was agricultural. Only a few sea-ports — Venice, Genoa, Pisa—aspired to commercial greatness; some of the inland towns—Asti, Chieri, Florence—throve by banking business. Others, like Milan, took to manufacturing industry; but all of them owed their lustre to the fact that they became the residence of the nobility and gentry of their respective districts.

Imagine what York, Chester, Gloucester or Winchester would be if all the "county families" had, since the days of King John, abandoned the halls and manor-houses on their estates, and built their palaces within the walls of their market towns or cathedral cities, and you will have an idea of what Italian cities have been and in some measure still are.

The limits of the city were in many instances determined by those of the diocese, the bishops having been invested with feudal jurisdiction as successors of the former dukes and counts.

For a time each of these towns enjoyed its individual existence and attained its separate develop-

ment; but at a very early period jealousies and wars sprang up among them, and as a natural consequence, the largest and strongest overcame and subjugated their neighbours. Milan crushed Crema, Lodi and Como. Genoa crippled Pisa, which became a prey to Florence. Ravenna sank from her rank as capital of the Exarchate, and together with Bologna and all the cities of Romagna, was made to acknowledge Papal supremacy.

A few of the cities, like Ferrara, Modena and Parma, flourished as Imperial or Papal fiefs under princes of their own, and the presence of a Court enabled them to keep up an artificial splendour based upon something besides mere territorial wealth; but upon being deprived of that temporary advantage they had to fall back on their inalienable resources; decline set in, and the squalor and misery to which they very rapidly sank were enhanced by the contrast of their past importance.

They became the mere ghosts of their former selves.

Take Pisa, for one: it is still with some travellers a favourite winter residence. It is only during the heats of July or August that its grand desolation will strike the beholder. Its Cathedral and Baptistry, its "Holy Field," and other artistic wonders, will long stand as evidence of a power which was at home in all the known seas; but the silence and sadness of so many streets and squares, the decay of so many churches and palaces, have a long tale

to tell of a proud population determined to die off with their birthplace, or migrating by thousands, while the sense of humiliation and helpless despair seized on the few who were left behind.

Those brave old citizens had built for eternity, and they never seemed more eager and active in rearing up grand edifices for the embellishment of their cities than just on the eve of what was to be their final day. Those town-halls and cathedrals which they erected as the homes of their greatness were almost invariably destined to become its sepulchral monuments.

Is it not so everywhere and at all times? Did not the building of St. Peter's mark the period of decline for the Papacy? And has not the erection of the new palace of St. Stephen's coincided with the first symptoms of English parliamentary impotence?

There is however so much in the natural beauty and in the artistic achievements of the Tuscan cities, that these gifts alone will long redeem them from the sense of loneliness befitting mere haunted houses. Siena, Lucca, Arezzo are stone cities. They have a tidy, tolerably clean, and not cheerless appearance. But it is otherwise in Emilia, in the main a region of brick, where we miss the broad flag pavements, the marbles and the clean masonry of the Sub-Apennine districts. Here in Parma as at Ferrara or Modena, everything seems out of repair. The mortar peels off and falls, and the bricks crumble often at the corners of the loftiest palaces. Only

a few of the central streets have thinly-whitewashed houses glaring in the sunshine. But even these have a tawdry, make-shift, poverty-stricken look. I seek in vain for ancient buildings, with marble columns, ledges and balconies blackened by age, of which I have still a vivid remembrance as they stood in the days of my youth, ever so many years ago. It would have cost too much to preserve, finish or restore them in their original style; they have been patched up and plastered over anyhow, as if love of the beautiful were no longer a feeling to be indulged, as if shabbiness must necessarily set in when taste and elegance can no longer be afforded. The thick groves and neat hedges in the public promenade had also become too ragged and tangled for the niggardly municipal gardener. I see gravel now where turf once was; and fine plane and acacia trees which I saw planted, and under the shade of which I frolicked in my boyhood, have been cut down from very shame of the decay into which they had been suffered to fall.

There is nothing more depressing and miserable than the despondency which seems to sink to the hearts of the inhabitants of these spectral cities. Can nothing be contrived to save them from a lingering death? Have Parma, Modena and Ferrara no surviving element of vitality because the paltry glitter of their ducal courts has departed from them? And is their doom to extend to all other discrowned cities—to Florence, to Turin, and

above all to Venice? These are sad, serious questions, to which Italy must find an answer.

Look all round about this little town of Parma. Its population has not dwindled, its territory has not lost its fertility. It is on the contrary better cultivated and more productive than at any former period. It is no longer cramped within jealously-guarded borders. It enjoys the amplest freedom of commerce; its fruits are carried all over Lombardy; its splendid cattle finds its way across France to the English butcher's stall. Men still not very old remember the days when a pound of butter sold for 24 c., and a pound of cherries or of the most luscious figs or grapes for 1 c., simply because the duchy was shut in by an impassable line of customs, and a Parmesan had either to eat all he produced or suffer it to go to waste. Now produce goes out and money comes in; and the town and territory are brought into contact with all the communities which can give what Parma lacks, and which lack what Parma has to give.

We must be allowed to hope that this general discouragement and this sluggish and despondent decay, are merely transient. All or very nearly all the old noble and wealthy families who owned the land have either died off or hide their diminished heads in poverty and obscurity. Their property, as well as that of the State and Church which has also come to the hammer, has been parcelled out, often at low price, among a smaller gentry, who hitherto

have neither capital nor energy, nor spirit of association equal to the emergencies by which they see themselves confronted. The tie between the old landlord and his peasantry has snapped. The peasant, left to himself, uncared for and unenlightened, wearies of his work, throws down his spade, and comes with his family to the town, to add to the numbers of its swarming *proletariat*, and to infest the streets with beggary and petty theft. Here in the town there is neither intelligence nor charity to suggest the establishment of profitable manufacturing industries. The tendency is for every man to live for himself, to save, to renounce all luxuries for the enjoyment of which he may have to exert himself. The petty proprietor, the professional gentleman, or the Government official who has enough to live upon, who can by any amount of stint eke out a mean, cheerless, grovelling existence, is unwilling to work either for his own benefit or for his neighbour's sake. "What he has," he says, "is enough for him. Why should he toil for others? Why should he take his talent out of the napkin, or, what comes to the same thing, his money out of the Five per Cents.? Why should he join any spirited association, or promote any public enterprise? It is for the Government to see to such things, and the action of the Government is only felt in the exaction of crushing taxes."

It is impossible that society should be permanently organized on such short-sighted, selfish prin-

ciples; and, as we shall see, the same is not altogether the case in many other Italian towns, even in some of those which have never been capitals, and which either rely on their agricultural resources or strain every nerve to procure employment for their needy population by the promotion of special industries. In defiance of the official circumscription of provinces, geography is rapidly organizing Italy in regions. In spite of all artificial contrivances, the natural capitals of Piedmont and Liguria, Lombardy, Venetia, &c., are all that are likely to escape the downfall with which the "Hundred Cities" of Italy are threatened. For Turin, Milan, Bologna, &c., prosperity may be insured by the advantages of their position; but the remainder must either stay their decline, or work out their resurrection by the development of new energies. In the absence of natural and wholesome elements of life, attempts are made to galvanize some of the most hopelessly decaying cities by artificial means. Even in remote ages, in Republican and still more in princely times, when, as we have seen, the growth of one town involved the dwindling of its neighbours, the ruling city endeavoured to make amends to the minor places of which it destroyed the importance, by bestowing upon them such institutions as could flourish at a distance from the seat of Government. Efforts were especially made to substitute in these fallen towns academical for political life. It was thus

that the Visconti of Milan fostered the University of Pavia, the Republic of Venice that of Padua, the Medici of Florence those of Pisa and Siena, and the Popes those of Bologna and Ferrara. The idea that schools would thrive best either in cloisters or rural solitudes, or amidst the grass-grown streets of a spectre-city, prevailed throughout the world for centuries. Places like Pavia or Pisa became University towns, and were deemed fit for nothing else. Take their Archigymnasia from them, it is now urged, and the objects as well as the means of existence are at an end.

It seems difficult to bring the Italians to understand the import of that plain and homely maxim, that "you cannot eat your cake and have it." They profess in the abstract to be anxious about the general welfare, but they grudge the sacrifice of local interests. Nothing is more natural than the pride they feel in the traditions of their "Hundred Cities"; but if they refer to the causes to which many of them owe their origin, they must perceive that the co-existence of them all in their former conditions has become almost impracticable.

We have here a general uneasiness about the chronic disorder of the finance; we hear a universal outcry for retrenchment. There are too many Courts of Cassation in Italy, too many Tribunals of Appeal, too many bishoprics, above all things, too many academical institutions. Wise politicians declare that out of the twenty-one universities in

Italy, by far the greatest number "are doing no good." But it could easily be proved that they do great harm, were it only because they stand in the way of each other's development, and hinder each other's efficiency. Universities in our days are colossal establishments; they require immense resources, and on the Continent at least, can only flourish in the great centres. The University of Berlin, for instance, disposes of means which Bonn or Heidelberg cannot muster. The absorption of minor seats of learning by the high school of the capital is even in Germany an inevitable and by no means remote eventuality. The same tendency to enrich the University of Turin, and more lately that of Rome, at the expense of those of Genoa and Pavia, of Naples and Palermo, too obviously manifests itself in Italy; and such cities as Milan and Florence, which had no universities, have resorted to new contrivances to endow themselves with *Istituti Superiori*, *Istituti di Perfezionamento*, and other establishments which under new names perform the office of universities to the great detriment of the old ones.

The Italians, upon being called to new political existence, have shown the most laudable zeal to promote popular education. They understood that freedom and knowledge must go hand in hand, and have spared neither trouble nor expense to supply their illiterate population with schools. They wished education to be general—lay or secular—

and even compulsory, if it had been practicable or advisable; but above all things as cheap as possible. Gratuitous education in elementary schools, gymnasiums and lyceums was almost imposed upon them by the traditions of the country, and by the democratic tendencies developed by their revolution in its early stages. It is for the interest of the State more than of the individual that every citizen should be taught whatever may be of use to him in his capacity of a freeman. Even those politicians who believe in universal suffrage invariably deem it reasonable to exclude the illiterate from the polls. As it is for the country's good that the people receive instruction, it is argued, it ought to be for the country to pay for it.

But the ardour of the Italians for the mental emancipation of the masses has gone too far. They have drawn no distinction between popular and academical education; they did not see that if the mere school should be made as cheap as possible, the university should on the contrary set the highest value on its teaching. Universities in Italy are outbidding each other in the reduction or even abolition of academical fees. The notions of the flash old French Republicanism with its "*carrière ouverte aux talents*" has still a strong hold of men's minds here. The door of the so-called "liberal professions" is thrown open to every young man who can afford his own board and lodging, and these are not very costly for the dwellers in the

university towns themselves, who can attend their classes while living with their parents. If we bear in mind that, besides the universities which only educate lawyers and physicians, there are also priestly seminaries, monastic colleges, military and naval schools, academies of the fine arts, and conservatories of music; that in all these institutions the instruction is also gratuitous, or at least reduced to infinitesimal charges; and that the church, the army and navy, painting, architecture and music in all its branches are also reckoned among the liberal professions, you will perceive that no youth in Italy need be at a loss for the means of raising himself in the social scale.

But if all academical and other educational institutions are to be made free and gratuitous stepping-stones for the advancement of its aspiring youth, who is to pay for their support? If everything is contrived for the benefit of those who have a calling for the liberal professions, out of what rank will the equally honourable and more useful and necessary handicrafts be recruited? And why should carpenters or tailors not only be deprived of the right of being brought up to their business at the public expense as well as the "professionals" are, but also be made to contribute to the bringing up of the professionals? The nurseries for briefless lawyers, for doctors without patients, for singers with cracked voices, for artists without genius, are too frequent, too cheap, too easy of access; the studies are not

sufficiently thorough, nor the examinations as severe as they should be. A nation cannot live by law and physic alone, and the graduates which so many doctor-manufactories cast out in yearly batches hang loose upon society, and become its pests either as needy place-hunters, or as political agitators and adventurers.

But the disturbance in the balance between the different ranks and classes of society is not by any means the greatest inconvenience arising from this exorbitant number of academical institutions. The evil is that in Italy as in England, whatever may be said to the contrary, men set no value on what costs them nothing. University men studied very little in olden times, but at the present day they do not study at all. The Ministers of Public Instruction have been hard at work multiplying the branches of academical tuition; they have increased the number of professors, doubled and trebled their salaries; but they find that good, learned and efficient instructors in the vast number required are not to be had for their money. They have not unfrequently to put up with men of mean capacity, and even of indifferent characters. To secure some of the best they are driven to accept or solicit the services of political men, whose time is divided between the discharge of their duties in the lecture-room and their attendance in the Chamber or the Senate. From these "servants of two masters" no regular or earnest attention to their classes can be

expected. Studies at the universities have assumed a desultory, slovenly character. Unpunctual and inattentive masters can make no earnest and diligent pupils. With all ideas of order the basis of discipline is shaken. In the days of national struggle students had been countenanced and even encouraged in their mutinous behaviour. Politics still run high in the school-room now that the cause of the country is triumphant, and young men should think not of actually fulfilling, but simply of fitting themselves to fulfil public duties. Undergraduates seek distinction at spouting clubs, and shallow-minded teachers court popularity by enlivening dull lectures with misplaced liberal or patriotic clap-trap.

It is upon these considerations that the expediency of having few and good, instead of many and indifferent universities begins to force itself upon the minds of Italian statesmen. Custom, noble traditions, vested rights, rich endowments plead for many—too many of them. It certainly seems cruel that such time-honoured institutions as Pavia or Padua, Pisa or Bologna, should be interfered with; that minor academies like Parma or Modena should be deprived of the funds with which princely liberality endowed them. Yet universities without students and without professors must certainly be ranked among parasitical institutions, and the flocking of the population towards the great centres, the means of which these dispose, and the attractions they hold out to professional and other learned men,

are rapidly centralizing academical instruction in the great cities to the rapid desertion of the minor towns.

In spite of all the efforts of the Government to place at least some of the principal academical establishments on an equal footing, it becomes very evident that not one of them will have a chance of holding its own against Rome. The university in the capital has hardly been three years in existence, it is as yet a mere embryo, and yet already its staff of instructors consists mainly of the spoils of rival institutions. And whatever may be spared from the capital is rapidly absorbed by those *Istituti Superiori* of Florence, Milan and other large places which offer a more extensive sphere of usefulness and—better salaries. Country life as it is understood in England is unknown here. The wealthy and cultivated classes crowd together in the cities, by preference in the larger cities; and this tendency, which was already very decided when opposed by material obstacles, has of course gained strength with every step made towards the unification of the Peninsula and the improvement of the means of communication.

The prospects of these old ghost-cities of Italy is therefore by no means cheering. The Government may take nothing from them; but it certainly can give them nothing. Italy is in no condition to allow herself superfluities. The tree which does not bear good fruit must be cut down and cast into

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the fire. It is not for a country which is doing away with monastic institutions to keep up sinecures, or as they are called here "*Canonicati*," in high schools and superior institutions which no longer answer the purpose for which they were intended.

But where the State fails to help, it may be said, the city for its own interests will come to the rescue. Unfortunately the experiment has been tried, but hitherto with indifferent success. Of the twenty-one universities of Italy four—*i. e.* Ferrara, Perugia, Urbino and Camerino—are declared to be "free," and subsist on their own endowments, eked out by subventions from the municipal treasuries. But however liberally either the State or the city may subsidize academical establishments, it is no less certain most of them are doomed to an obscure and inglorious however slow death. No social unit can exist unless it has an element of life within it. A high school, an academy, a conservatory, a tribunal, a bishopric, a garrison, are no such elements; they are only artificial and as such precarious sources of prosperity. Cities in our days must live by work; and Como, Bergamo, Biella and other places in Lombardy and Piedmont, show their sisters how industry can throw open wider and more perennial sources of well-being than could be hoped from the presence of a Bishop and his Chapter, of a General and his Staff, and even of a King and his Court. The mere rubbish of old Italy must

be swept away to clear the ground for the new edifice. Either the spectre-cities must become dead cities, or a new spirit must spring up among them. Happen what may, nothing can rob Italy of her bountiful land. It little matters whether Italy boasts of a hundred cities or of only half the number—it little matters whether the large centres swallow the minor towns. The essential is that the region should develope all the elements of a prosperous existence; for the general well-being of the community cannot fail to reach even its most insignificant localities. With something of the energy evinced by the Italians in the Middle Ages, not only Milan and Florence, Pavia and Pisa, but even such long-forsaken places as Chieri or Crema, Prato or Pescia, could gain a livelihood, and Italy could be one country rejoicing in its capital, and in its regional centres, without having to deplore the decline and fall of any of her "Hundred Cities."

CHAPTER VII.

THE OLD PIEDMONTESE CAPITAL.

Turin—Thousand Pageantries at Turin—The Alpine Tunnel—Mont Cenis, Past and Present—Turin Illuminations—The Shah in Turin—The Cavour Monument—Happy Meetings—Turin, Past and Present—The Inauguration—The D'Azeglio Monument—Cavour and D'Azeglio—D'Azeglio at Cannero.

Of all the cities of Italy, Turin is the one which calls up my happiest and my saddest remembrances. I was here when Charles Albert drew the "sword of Italy"—I was here after Novara, when Victor Emmanuel sheathed it—I came hither ten years later with the French of Solferino. All the rapid vicissitudes which promoted the Court of Savoy to the proud position of capital of Italy, as well as the vile trick which sunk it to the rank of a provincial town, are vivid in my recollection. Here I was at Cavour's burial; here again at the inauguration of his monument. The opening of the Great Alpine Tunnel, the Shah's visit, and many more pageantries and festivities associate the idea of Turin in my mind with the events which have most pleasingly or most painfully affected my existence.

I am not a native of Turin; yet its keen and still mountain air suits me better than that of any other town residence. Turin has little attraction for strangers, but I feel at home in it. "Turin is at the gate of Italy," people say, "but not of Italy." And it is in the sense in which this is spoken that I love the place. Turin, like London—if a thing so small can be named in the same breath with a thing so big—wins upon a closer acquaintance. One cannot fall in love with it at first sight as one does with Paris. It is just the place to live and work in, but not to be idle in—not at least in a pleasurable, profitable, reputable idleness. The first requisite of a place of residence for a working man is that men should be at work about him. He can have little sympathy with the drones of a human hive, and unless he can respect the people he has to live with he runs the risk of gradually losing his self-respect.

The beauties of Turin lie chiefly out of Turin. It has charming villas on the neighbouring hills; an unrivalled panorama of mountains, a green, moist, exuberantly fertile plain; it lies at the confluence of two brawling Alpine torrents; it is open to the breeze when there is any stirring; its porticoes have equal shelter against sun and rain. I confess I cannot quarrel, as so many do, with its straight streets at right angles. I love a town where I never lose sight of the country—a town where a great brown Alp or a range of verdant hills closes the vista at the end of almost every street.

I doubt if even Paris can get up such gorgeous shows as I have witnessed in the little Piedmontese capital. There lives in Turin a tinman of genius, Giacinto Ottino by name, who has been knighted by the King, and who can on all great occasions treat his townsmen, and for the matter of that also the Milanese, Florentines and even the proud Romans, to such a display of gaslight galaxies, transparencies and other contrivances as have power to change a town into a fairy-land scene. Ottino is great everywhere, but nowhere so great as in Turin, not only because Antæus-like his genius catches fire by contact with his native soil, but also because those very rectilinear and rectangular streets, those monotonous rows of buildings which seem so wearisome, and are indeed so commonplace in the daylight, lend themselves admirably to all the tricks of perspective and quaint effects of long lines of fire which constitute the main charm of an illumination.

Imagine you had been with me at the inauguration of the Great Alpine Tunnel. It was a great event for the Italians, who felt proud of their achievement of the most stupendous mole-work man had hitherto ever attempted—a work hardly second to the excavation of the Suez Canal, hardly to be surpassed by the submarine passage between Dover and Calais, were it ever to be carried beyond the stage of a mere project.

I am not sure the world has been altogether the

gainer by the success attending upon this noble exploit by which the great Alpine barrier has been struck off the traveller's path. Few men in the world can feel a stronger love than I have for the Alps, and I remember the time when I deemed a year lost unless one or two of its summer months at least were spent among the "peaks, passes and glaciers." Greatly as the present and future generations may be congratulated on the easy access they have obtained into Italy,—escaping the stifling diligence, the shivering sledge, the reeking cantonier station, the avalanche, the foaming torrents, the fog, the wind, the weary, winding ascent, the dashing, giddy, tumbling down hill, the swaying of the lumbering vehicle on the brow of the yawning precipice—it is not quite certain that they will have nothing to regret, for the journey was not without its wild pleasures; and if you left the slow *berline*, with its jingling mules, and its red glaring bull's-eye in the rear, and walked forward alone, in that darkness, in that silence, along those cliffs, through those woods, over those chasms, which the night made so weird and unreal, if you peered into that gloom, and listened to the soughing wind and rushing water, there was hardly anything you might not fancy you could not see and hear. It was a night with the ghosts, and you would have been puzzled in the morning to reveal the awful secrets of that unknown world to other men or to yourself.

It was only by a walk or a ride that one could feel

the rapid, though gradual transition from north to south, from gloom to glare, from night-chill to morning warmth. "The very horses and other cattle," as it has been often observed, "seemed to feel the genial change, and they usually cheered up and frisked and gambolled, testifying by their neighing, braying, bellowing, the joy with which they hailed the approach of the fair region before them." Their instinct told them, "this is Italy." The descent is abrupt, precipitous—life grows apace around you at every downward stride; at the altitude where stunted firs thinly fringed the bare rocks on the Savoy side, the chestnut and walnut in all their luxuriance fill the Subalpine glen. The fig-tree shades the humblest cottage almost up to the mountain crest; and where the brown and sere surface of the soil in autumn strikes you as unredeemed barrenness, you may see on a nearer approach that the effect is produced by the pale stubble of the small patches of corn-field, alternating with the russet foliage of the small patches of vineyard, cultivated by the hardy mountaineer on terraced crags and cliffs where one would almost fancy the very goat would fear to venture.

Mont Cenis is no more: the glories of its sublime Napoleonic road, with the discomforts of dingy Lanslebourg, and clammy, unwholesome Susa, are as much things of the past as the stony track over which Marshal Trivulzio let down his artillery by ropes, in 1515, and the poet Alfieri, in 1780,

marshalled his fourteen thoroughbreds and English grooms—a march which he described as emulous of that of Hannibal and his heavy-laden elephants. Mont Cenis is no more; and the last recollections of it will be associated in my mind with the white turbans and guttural accents of the Turcos whom I saw encamped on the top in 1859, striking me as a dream of that remote past, when their Saracen ancestors, in the midst of that swarming of wild hordes which preceded the year one thousand, beset the whole mountain crest, laying waste the valleys on both sides, and for many years putting an end to all intercourse between the adjacent regions.

All this is at an end. The railway now leaves France and daylight at Modane, and emerges into the sun's rays at Bardonnèche, whence you rush through twenty-six tunnels, and catch just a glimpse of dissolving Alpine views, as you are whirled down the great wide gap of the valley of the Dora, and are landed in a few hours among all the comforts and luxuries of the station at Turin.

It was to celebrate this great phasis in the history of the world's progress that Turin lighted all her candles in the evening of the 16th of September, 1871. The royal and other personages who had gone to Bardonnèche for the inauguration, found, on their return, a fac-simile of the tunnel they had just left behind, done in fire. There was on the right of the station the heavy but grand and massive opening of the Alpine gallery, and behind it, and

through it, the whole length of the tunnel itself, in concentric fiery arches, running all along the Stradale del Re, nearly a mile in length, one of the most gorgeous views the eye could rest upon. This was the special show of the evening: at the end of the tunnel on the Viale di Po, you had another vista, nearly a mile in length, of chandeliers blue, red and white, green, red and white, as far as the bridge, beyond which the Rotunda of the Gran Madre di Dio was radiant with Bengal lights. You turned to the Piazza di Po, and the Via di Po, again a mile in length, all stars and wreaths of fire. At the end of it was Piazza Castello, with its lofty buildings and porticoes lined with fire. Out of it, on the left, was the Via Nuova, the way back to the station, all ablaze; the Piazza San Carlo all ablaze, the Via di Porta Nuova all ablaze, and, at the end, the Piazza before the station, with its water-spout a hundred feet high, glancing with its pure spray in all that blaze like the veil of a bride amid the tapers lighting up her nuptial festivities.

But Turin and Ottino outdid themselves in an even more astonishing manner on the 25th of July, 1873, the day in which the Shah honoured the King of Italy with his visit. The journey of the Asiatic monarch was so timed as to put off his arrival till after dark. The railway station where Victor Emmanuel received him was dimly lighted up that the eye might be more forcibly struck with the glare that was to dazzle it on the outside. Few

cities in the world have a more stately entrance than Turin on this side, at the Piazza Carlo Felice. The square-garden has in a few years grown up to high luxuriance; the trees, the walks, the surrounding buildings, have a freshness proof against all heat and dust; and there is something in the way in which everything mean and squalid is hidden out of sight in this city which gives the best idea of the people's sense of the fitness of things, and creates a pleasing illusion that the squalor and meanness which are nowhere seen may actually have no existence. Lovely as the spot is by day, what was it in its blaze of coloured lights, the effulgence of which hovered over the ever-green foliage of the garden, and over the spray of that wonderful fountain, amidst the festoons, pyramids, and other devices, by which gas-light was made to assume every imaginable shape and hue, and by which the soft summer night was turned into day? It might seem as if even Giacinto Ottino's art could no further go; but as the Court carriages issued into the square, and the cannon thundered from the hill, Bengal lights blazed up from every nook and corner, flashing their blue and red radiance high above the swarming crowd, giving the scene a magic charm which might well transcend all that even an Eastern imagination could conjure up in its day-dreams. The same sea of light showed the way to the welcome guest all along that *Via Triumphalis* of Porta Nuova,

which leads from the station to the Palace, a line somewhat less than two-thirds of a mile in length, the pageant showing to the greatest advantage as it debouched from Via Nuova into Piazza Castello, crossing over to the Palace door. The Court carriages were preceded and followed by outriders in the royal scarlet liveries, and by squadrons of lancers alternated with squadrons of the King's Cuirassiers and Hundred Guards. The sight the square presented at the moment was something not soon to be forgotten. The King's Palace, as most people know, stands back in a recess, enclosed by railings, taking up part of the eastern side of the square, facing the Via Nuova, and all that line of streets up to the station. On the right, as you look up to the Palace, you have the Palazzo Madama, lately the Senate or Upper House of Parliament, a quaint mediæval building, in every style of architecture, with a façade copied from the Louvre in front, and two lofty turrets of the fifteenth century in its rear, their moats filled up with a luxuriancy of well-trimmed exotic plants. The building rises alone like an island in the centre of the square, which is enclosed on all sides by colonnaded edifices harmonizing with the King's Palace, and from which issue in every direction the main thoroughfares of the city. In front of the Palazzo Madama hung an immense Persian flag, white and green, and on the roof there glimmered the "Star of Italy," an electric light bearing that

name, and since the emancipation of the country a common sight enough in the celebration of every national festivity. The crowd not only thronged the whole vast area of the square, but it was huddled up at the opening of the avenues as far as eye could reach. No words of mine could convey the effect those magic lights had on all the gleaming steel, the drawn swords, the helmets and cuirasses of the cavalry,—on the liveries, the glittering carriages, the caparisoned horses, and especially on the heaving and swaying multitude. On one side poured a flood of flaming red, converting the mass of shouting men and women into a masquerade of wild demons; on the other, there came a wave of pale green, giving the motley assemblage all the ghastliness of spectres. You could scarcely believe that you were looking on a mere earthly show. Giacinto Ottino, aware that he was to entertain an Oriental potentate, had summoned about him the wizards of the 'Arabian Nights,' and pressed all their genii into his service.

But, as I said, I have witnessed in Turin many other far more affecting, though less brilliant scenes. I was here, for instance, on the 11th of November, 1873, for the uncovering of the Cavour monument.

Those who like myself were present at the ceremony by which Count Cavour was consigned to his early grave, twelve years before, may have

thought that a greater tribute of public and private sorrow could not be paid to his memory. The dispute which was nearly arising, as to whether his remains should be laid beside those of the royal race at Superga, or amid those of Italy's illustrious dead at Santa Croce, was cut short by the piety of his relatives, who ruled that the great man should rest with his ancestors in their family vault at Santena. Those who wished for a monument had only to look round on united Italy, and the writing of his funeral oration could be safely entrusted to history.

His countrymen and contemporaries however seemed to think that something was also due to themselves. They wished that a solid memorial of the feelings with which they stood twelve years before round Cavour's coffin should go down to unborn generations; and they committed the care of perpetuating the features with which they were familiar to an artist whom long-established reputation had placed at the head of his profession. The monument was now ready; the site on which it was to rise was laid out; and it could not be unveiled without attracting a vast multitude to witness the solemn act. The city of Turin could not fail to be equal to the occasion; nor could Italy, nor could Europe be satisfied with a mere report of this act of posthumous justice. All the great and good among Cavour's countrymen, together with the representatives of friendly nations, were asked to

fill prominent places among the many thousands whom spontaneous reverence assembled on the hallowed spot. To the Italians, re-constituted into a nation after a long division, and not well re-assured about a success in which mere fortune bore so great a part, it seemed that no opportunity of asserting themselves should be neglected. Those among them who were with Cavour at the great work were only too glad of so good a chance of being brought together on the scene of their common exploits, of once more meeting under those colonnades, in those halls, and near those Chambers, where Cavour's wisdom and their devotion insured the triumph of a cause which had to be fought against such terrible odds. Turin became for one more day the capital of the new kingdom, and the monument was inaugurated by all who had a hand in rearing the national edifice—all but those many among Cavour's fellow-labourers who had not been summoned with him to an untimely rest.

A gathering of Cavour's friends round Cavour's monument, however imposing, could not fail to be a melancholy sight, for the man summed up an epoch and a generation; and it is appalling to consider the havoc which death had made, not only among the Balbos, the Alfieris, the Revels, Perrones, Giobertis, D'Azeglios, and the hundreds who opened the way for his success, but also among the Farinis, Lafarinas, Cassinis, and other men whom he distinguished as his followers, and on whose co-opera-

tion his achievement mainly depended. The ranks both of Cavour's seniors and juniors have been thinned with equal ruthlessness; and, in her eager and almost morbid anxiety to honour the dead, Italy would seem to evince misgivings about her ability to replace them. In every instance in which the men now trusted with her destinies appear somewhat unequal to the task before them, the loss of Cavour occurs to men's minds. And it is remarkable that, where Cavour's own work was so far advanced that "Alexander's Generals," as they have been aptly called, could be trusted with its completion—in all matters connected with the general policy of the country—Italy's good fortune continued unabated; while in those affairs to which Cavour's master-mind had either no leisure or no patience to attend,—such as the reforms in the administration and finance,—things are still in the same sad and hopeless confusion in which he left them. Minghetti, Visconti, Venosta, and the other statesmen who attended the Cavour ceremony, were among the few of those "Generals of Alexander" whom death had spared; and it is to be hoped that the genius of their former chief done in marble, which they came here to lay bare, may have inspired them with fresh courage to grapple with that large part of the world which their deceased master has "left them to conquer."

Those who were familiar with Turin in her palmy days of metropolitan honours would, had they

moved under the crowded porticoes on this mournful and yet auspicious occasion, have been surprised to see how easily the town has survived the blow which deprived her of her position as the seat of government. Cavour had engaged, when the first aspirations for Rome as a capital rose in the Italian Parliament in 1861, that "when Turin should cease to be the London of Italy, she should become the Italian Manchester." The promise is not so far from being realized. New motive powers have been drawn from the perennial waters of her Alpine streams; and there are now as many as 30,000 to 40,000 hands at work at her looms, mills and other manufactories of every description. Turin is inhabited by a stout-hearted race. The town to all outward seeming is as lively and thriving as it ever was; house-rent has been almost constantly on the rise; building is going on with greater briskness than in Florence or Rome; and there has been no falling off in the population since 1864. The new impulse given even to her petty retail trade is perceptible in the increased number of stalls and booths which encumber the colonnades of Via di Po and Piazza Castello—the *Portici della Fiera*—to the no small inconvenience and the sore trial of the patience of the passers-by. The traffic under these porticoes is more animated than it ever was. But a new population, one would say, a set of bustling men of business have superseded the politicians of former times; and it is only on some unusual occurrence

that the familiar faces of Cavour's old friends are to be seen in the crowd. At the Caffè del Cambio, in Piazza Carignano, the old haunt of Piedmontese legislators, there was, on this memorable day, at breakfast-time, a choice assemblage of those distinguished customers of olden times whose patronage from 1848 to 1864 made the fortune of the establishment. It was pleasant to see and hear the greetings between friends whom various fortunes had sundered, and whom this one day had brought together from distant homes and from various avocations.

The activity of the Turin municipality in cleansing, whitewashing, and otherwise embellishing the city was above all praise. The best houses were repainted in light colours, chiefly pale green, for the occasion, proof against the dense November fog which clung to the pavement and robbed the streets of that panorama of lovely hills and rugged mountains which makes Turin an unique spot in this Subalpine region. New handsome squares are rising in every direction, especially at the end of Dora Grossa, and round the Piazza d'Armi. The old Ripari, or ramparts, long since dismantled and planted with avenues of trees as Giardini Publici, were now levelled with the ground, and laid out in fine blocks of houses, or *Isole*, along new broad thoroughfares and spacious squares. Still the greatest attention had been paid to Piazza Carlo Emmanuele II., or Piazza Carlina, till now a wine-market en-

cumbered with clumsy wooden sheds, to-day a fine open area surrounded by plain yet stately buildings, in the midst of which the Cavour Monument, all swathed in linen cloth, awaited the hand which was to reveal it to the gaze of the multitude. The spot had been beautified with a profusion of flags and streamers, real shrubs and artificial flowers, wreaths, bells, shields and cognizances, the main ornaments being some fine, tall Corinthian columns at the square-ends, with groves of evergreen and flower-shaped gaslights for the evening illumination at the base. On either side of the monument rose two great stands with seats for favoured spectators, and between them the King's Pavilion with a white and blue awning on spears (the Cavour colours), and surmounted by the flag of Italy and the arms of Turin and the sister cities.

At two o'clock, the appointed hour, choice troops of various arms were drawn up in the area of the square, and with them the national battalions of the old and of the new Italian capital. In the stands, under the awnings, the *élite* of the Italian political world, with a sprinkling of ladies, were seated. In front, on a large carpet, in various groups, stood, on one side of the Royal pavilion, soldiers and statesmen of high rank, and all the foreign ministers; on the other, the Vice-President of the Senate, the President of the Chamber and a large number of both Houses. Presently the bands struck up the Royal March, and the King and Princes walked

into the square, the King placing himself in front of the pavilion. At this very moment the linen covering which wrapt the monument dropped from the group, and the white marble stood out bright and chaste in the murky air. There followed addresses to the King with words of reply from His Majesty The *procès verbal* of the transaction was then read, when the King and his suite walked up to and round the monument. At that very moment the rain, which had long been gathering over the immense assemblage (it was reckoned that at least 50,000 strangers crowded the hotels and lodging-houses of the city), came down in a torrent. Instantly there arose a great hubbub and a universal stampede. That was the crowning sight. The vast space in the square disappeared under a serried *testudo* of struggling umbrellas. There was a scamper of drenched uniforms and draggled silk dresses under such poor and precarious shelter as the awnings afforded. But soon the discomfiture was complete. The huddled mass of spectators tramped and paddled off in various directions, and the monument was left in solitude.

And well it was for the monument and its sculptor that the storm should cut short the quips and jeers and downright ribaldries with which the work was most deservedly criticized. The group, the performance of the Florentine Dupré, was creditable enough to the executive powers of the artist, but this scarcely made up for the deficiency of his in-

ventive faculties. The monument was both meaningless and indecent. Cavour is represented on a lofty pedestal, robed in Roman garb, with a half-naked woman, signifying Italy, kneeling at his feet, pressing her bare bosom against his bare knees—clinging to him in a wanton attitude, and holding up to his breast a wreath intended for his brow. On the pedestal and round the main figures are allegorical beings in various attitudes, all miserably shivering in their scanty draperies, representing "Right" and "Duty," "Progress," "Free Trade," and other impossible idealities, not to be deciphered without a key—altogether a sorry jumble, the demolition of which would certainly be a more satisfactory ceremony than its erection.

On the following day, with analogous formalities, another monument, the bronze statue of Massimo d'Azeglio, was laid bare to the public. It was a great mistake of the municipal authorities of Turin to crowd together the two ceremonies, with the danger that the paler star might be eclipsed by the blaze of the brighter luminary. Comparison was challenged where none was possible or advisable, and any falling off in the attendance of the spectators, to whatever cause it might be attributed, would damage the effect of the less attractive sight. The Italians are rather apt to over-do this matter of monuments, anniversaries and centenaries, forgetting that the best records of the departed must live in their works, and that one canto of the 'Orlando

Furioso' is worth all the statues that either Reggio or Ferrara may raise in honour of Ariosto. The same and more may be said about the expediency of disinterring and removing from place to place the remains of distinguished men, as it has been done for Ugo Foscolo, or Daniele Manin; or mummifying and petrifying them to keep them under glass-cases, as was the case with Mazzini. Perhaps the time will come when the Italians will think more of the living, and "let the dead bury the dead."

The circumstance that the monuments of Cavour and D'Azeglio were uncovered on two successive days, could not fail to suggest an attempt to contrast the different genius of the two great patriot statesmen. Unquestionably Cavour had by far the larger brain, letting alone the fact that he was more successful. Cavour was one of the world's greatest workers; D'Azeglio was simply an *amateur* in politics, as in all literary, artistic and even military pursuits. Both of them loved their country, but with Cavour patriotism was a task, with D'Azeglio, in a great measure, a sentiment. Cavour chose public life as a business; D'Azeglio entered it from a sense of duty, and as a matter of irksome necessity. Neither of them had the least faith in the possibility of a United Italy; for Cavour, after sounding Manin in Paris, in 1852, came back to Turin giving him up as "an unpractical man who was still dreaming of Italian unity"—a dream which Cavour himself was so soon destined to bring to a reality.

And D'Azeglio, who died before the annexation of Venice and Rome, questioned whether, even if it was possible to "make Italy," it would be found equally practicable to "make the Italians." But Cavour, though he did not belong to the *tout ou rien* school, though he deemed the complete emancipation and unification of the Peninsula a hopeless scheme, was at least determined to strive for that object with all the energies he might command and to the full extent to which he might carry it; and, as he proceeded, the work grew in his hands, the ground smoothed itself before him, and by an audacity which was to the full matched by his discretion, aided also by a combination of propitious circumstances which seemed almost miraculous, he overcame one obstacle after another, and was fortunate enough to die with those words on his lips, "*L'Italia è fatta*," which at the point matters had been brought up to by him, were already so much more than a prophecy.

D'Azeglio had neither the same tenacity of purpose nor the same confidence in his own strength. He did not trouble himself as little about the means by which his end might be accomplished as Cavour did. He was a gentleman-patriot, as he was a *Pittor-Cavaliere*. In great emergencies, as when, a writer, he held up the Papal Government to execration in his 'Casi di Rimini,' or when, as a minister, he saved both king and constitution by his "Proclama di Moncalieri," he did that for his

country without which all Cavour's subsequent labour would have been vain; but he had no fibre for steady work—he had no patience for the petty parliamentary squabbles, and for the paltry diplomatic tricks which count for so much in a statesman's career. He would go to his grave, like Bayard, as the *Chevalier sans reproche;* he had not the moral courage to say, as Cavour is reported to have said, after Danton, "Perish my name and my memory, so that Italy be made!" With this reserve only can the names of the two great patriots deserve to be pronounced in the same breath. Here lies the point of contact and the immeasurable distance between them. Both had the same aim before them; but one of them went to his goal through thick and thin, regardless of the dirt on the path he trod—the other could never be made to understand that he who wishes for the end must put up with the means. On one side was intensity of will and intellectual power; on the other, keenness of moral sense. The Italians who may see to what extent each of the two contributed to the great national work, now that the object has been attained, will perhaps be able to maintain it by a policy combining the craft of a Cavour with the honesty of a D'Azeglio.

It is upon these considerations that, greatly as I admire the transcendent mind of Cavour, I entertain a peculiar veneration for the chivalrous character of his friend and rival. It was this feel-

ing which led me to undertake a pilgrimage to the Villa near Cannero, on Lake Maggiore, where the last years of the author of 'Ettore Fieramosca' were spent, and where house, garden, furniture and all, was the man's own creation, and spoke eloquently of him—a small house, intended for the bachelor life of a man who was twice a widower, with a long strip of land on the steep bank of the lake, laid out in groves and walks, and with the view it enjoys of the broad sheet of water and the mountains, making up as lovely a home as a poet and artist could desire. It was here that, among other things, he wrote those memoirs, 'I miei Ricordi,' which threw so much light on his own character, and on that old Italian life which it is as impossible to regret as it would be wrong to wish to forget.

The house was not ready for its owner before 1856, and he died on the 15th of January, 1866, when he was in his sixty-eighth year. The destinies which were to give Italy a new life were within the interval rapidly maturing. At the time D'Azeglio first settled on the lake, the Austrians were still lords and masters of its eastern shore, and D'Azeglio, who had come to terms with them after Novara, could, by looking across the water, descry from his windows at Cannero the cannon bristling on the new forts which the jealous foreigner had reared near the water's edge at Luino and Laveno, reminding him of that sacred cause for

which he had bravely, though vainly, shed his blood at Vicenza. Three years later Solferino was fought, and the Austrians had to fall back from Maggiore to Garda, from the Ticino to the Mincio; and one year later all Italy was Italian, only leaving the patriot to long for "*Roma e Venezia.*" Yet another twelvemonth, and D'Azeglio's rival, Cavour, died, and his successors compromised the Roman question by the "September Convention" of 1864, and the transfer of the capital from Turin to Florence. D'Azeglio looked upon what had been done towards the emancipation of his country as little short of a miracle. He did not think that more could be achieved, or more should be undertaken. The policy which "ekes out the lion's hide by patches of the fox's skin" was not in his line. Had he been in Cavour's place, the expedition to Marsala would never have been openly disavowed and secretly abetted; Castelfidardo would never have been fought, Italy would never have been made. Even when Italy had by her good star been brought so far, D'Azeglio conceived that she neither could nor should aspire to go farther. He did not think it possible for her to confront Austria in the field, nor could he consent that she should emancipate herself by foreign aid. He did not think it practicable or even advisable to take the patrimony from the Pope. He accepted Florence for a permanent capital; he thought the war between Church and State had been carried as far as

it could go with safety. He could not anticipate Sadowa, and one German power ridding Italy of another. He could not foresee Sedan, and the utter annihilation of the French Protectorate in Rome. The events which went so far beyond his expectation found him cold in his family vault. Shortly before his death, among the many visitors who from time to time broke upon his seclusion, bringing him news of the world, there came Admiral Persano, who vainly strove to rouse the noble man's drooping spirits by descanting on the strength and efficiency of the Italian Army, and the good appointment and discipline of the Italian Navy, representing how, in the event of a war with Austria, which was then considered inevitable, the Italian battalions would storm the Quadrilateral, and the Italian iron-clads sweep the Adriatic, and burn the Austrian squadron as it crouched for safety behind the ramparts of Fiume or Trieste. D'Azeglio shook his head, and on the enthusiasm of his visitor threw the cold water of his half-genial, half-sarcastic pleasantries. Had he been allowed to live through 1866 and 1870, he would certainly have rejoiced with his countrymen upon their unhoped-for acquisitions of Venice and Rome; but the names of Custozza and Lissa would not the less have been found indelibly graven in his heart.

Notwithstanding the frequency of her splendid public entertainments, Turin is "not happy," and she is now especially at feud with Milan on account

of the removal of the Central Administration of the Alta Italia Railway Company from the Piedmontese to the Lombard city—a transaction by which the population of Turin will, it is supposed, be thinned by the migration of about 1,000 officials of all ranks and their families. A city which by the strenuous exercise of its industrial energies has so gloriously survived its downfall from her rank at the head of the kingdom, ought easily to get over any loss it may suffer from ceasing to be the "Mugby Junction" of Northern Italy. Turin, like Milan, has always been considered a self-standing city, whose existence was too firmly grounded on its agricultural wealth to be greatly affected by any ebb and flow of its floating population. But the Turinese are a stiff-necked, highly sensitive race, and they are still brooding over the grievance of the sudden and violent removal of the seat of government from their walls—an event which arrayed some of their most distinguished public men in a factious opposition, a kind of *Fronde*, under the name of the *Permanente*, and constituted them into an element of discord and disorder during the whole period of the establishment of the Government of Florence.

It is painful to witness the evil passions to which this clashing of local interests gives rise. "Belfry Politics" are still a great evil in Italy, and might almost be taken as a confirmation of the worst forebodings of the ill-omened croakers who contemplated the dangers likely to accrue to Italian unity

from municipal jealousy. So far as the North is concerned, however, there is little serious ground for apprehension. There is no chance of a renewal of the feuds of Mediæval Italy; no chance of any controversy by which mere local advantages may be involved, compromising the great general interests of the nation. We must not expect to see the people of Turin toll their alarm-bell, lead out their *Carroccio*, and muster their youths in arms against the Milanese on the Ticino. They did not resort to any such extremities when they had to put up with the loss of the capital—a loss of which all later changes were the inevitable consequences. There was not then, and there is not now, in the wounded feelings of the Piedmontese, anything like hatred of their brethren, or resentment against them. Neither is there regret for the heroic effort and generous sacrifices by which Piedmont so powerfully contributed to bring about that unity of Italy which must lower its importance as a Sovereign State. What the Piedmontese have done they would do again a hundred times, were the results a hundred times more disastrous for them than they have been. But the *mauvais quart d'heure* in which they had to settle their own share of the national reckoning was, and is still, upon them, and no wonder if they somewhat grumble at the amount.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CITY OF LOMBARDY.

Milan in Town—A Milanese "Caffè"—Rich and Poor Milanese—Milan Tag-rag-and-bobtail—Milanese Good-nature—Milanese Impudence—Milan out of Town—A Festa and a Regatta—Lombard Beauty—Boating on Lake of Como—Lombard Courtesy—Life in Lombardy—Milan, Past and Present—Outside the Duomo—Inside the Duomo—Manzoni a Poet—Manzoni a Patriot—Manzoni's Funeral.

THE humours and oddities of a place are never seen to greater advantage than when its "Upper Ten Thousand" have left it. There is nobody in Milan now—except the Milanese. All who can and many who cannot afford it are away at the Baths—a good number at the Swiss or German Baths, whence many will come back later in the summer to their country seats at the Lakes or on the Hills of La Brianza. But these are the citizens of the world, different from those good *Busecconi*, or Tripe-eaters, who seem unable to breathe out of sight of the Duomo. The burghers of Milan, like those of all other Italian cities, are among the most untravelled animals in the world. What should they go abroad for? Does not every stranger come

to Milan? What can a Milanese see elsewhere that is not to be seen here? Or why should a man leave home if there is no place like it? Your Milanese has no other idea of enjoyment than that which a bench outside his *caffè* or his stall at the theatre supplies. Milan is one of the few cities in Italy which have no environs, and it feels no need of them. You can drive round the Place d'Armes in Turin; the new *Viale dei Colli*, or Hills Avenue, in Florence, is a promenade of unsurpassed loveliness; but Milan is satisfied with its *Giardini Pubblici* within the walls. No one here dreams of walking, riding or driving beyond the barriers, because there is nothing beyond except flatness and fertility, dust and dreariness. The old town bastions, with the view of the Alps, weather permitting, and the new Royal and Zoological Gardens, would indeed be pleasant lounges, and they are kept in excellent trim; but they are usually the resort of "carriage company,"—of those upper classes whom even the presence of the Shah could not bring back to town in any respectable number; but for your *Milanès de Milan*, he has got his Gallery and his Piazza del Duomo, his Caffè Cova and Caffè Biffi; and what more should he want?

How a Milanese managed to live before the great Gallery or Arcade was built, and before daylight was struck round the buttresses of the white marble Cathedral, it would be difficult to say. Milan has contrived to survive centuries of Spanish and

Austrian domination. It could exist under any imaginable circumstances, but it may be said never to have been more self-conscious or happier in itself than since it has become "of Italy, Italian." It is not that the Government of King Victor Emmanuel has ever done, or ever intends, or needs to do anything for Milan, further than load it with taxes and take from it every State institution which might raise it above the condition of the meanest provincial prefecture—say, above that of Sondrio, in Vattellina. What does Milan care for a General Command or a Court of Cassation, or what did it care, more lately, for the staff of officials of the Alta Italia Railway which the company insisted upon giving it, to the great annoyance and disgust of Turin? All that the great Lombard city requires is to be let alone—to have its own way and govern itself, well or ill. This is what the Austrians never seemed able to understand, and it is what the present rulers, whether from wisdom and good-nature, or from indolence and incapacity, know and practice.

Milan, left to her own devices, thinks chiefly, if not exclusively, of enjoying herself. There is a good deal of work going on in the city, we are told; a good deal more out of it, one might think. Even Spaniards and Austrians could not deprive Lombardy of its soil, nor prevent its painstaking, long-suffering, half-starved labourer from doing justice to it. The Milanese, he of the city, has

enough for himself—enough *pannera* and *offella* (rich cream and soft biscuit) if he works; nor is he very badly off if he does not. There is hardly a ragged coat or a bare foot about the streets; and a correspondent of the *Opinione*, the other day, wishing to badger General Ricotti, the Minister of War, attested that "his soldiers were not half as well dressed as the Milan street-sweepers." Positively there is not one professional beggar here. There may be hundreds or even thousands who have "no apparent means of living," but even these manage to live without means. The Caffè Biffi at the centre of the Gallery, another *caffè* at one end, and a *Birraria* at the other, encumber with their chairs and tables three-fourths of the famous Gallery. Those chairs are scarcely ever unoccupied at any hour of the morning or afternoon, and they are crowded to suffocation throughout the evening. There is a restaurant inside where people dine; there are benches outside where people who have dined, or wish you to believe that they have done so, use their toothpicks; but the real business going on inside and out is smoking and talking: the tobacco is indifferent, but the conversation is cordial, joyous and noisy. Out of all that vast multitude on the *caffè* benches—a multitude at this season hardly rising above the ranks of the middle classes—scarcely one dreams of stinting himself, or seems in any manner at a loss for the means of self-indulgence. Those happy idlers are all well-to-do

people, or—what comes to the same thing—all people who live as if they were.

Well-to-do people in general are at peace with themselves, and naturally also at peace with the world. There is no spot on earth where the principle "Live and let live" is more consistently understood and acted upon than at Milan. I have said that there are no professional mendicants in the city, but of unprofessional beggars the name is legion; and these mere amateurs exist, increase and multiply for the simple reason that their well-to-do fellow-citizens patronize, encourage, and like to have them about them. It would hardly be possible to conceive under what a variety of devices and disguises, under what pretences of honest branches of industry, vagrancy contrives to flourish among these easy-going Milanese. Prowling around, and even under, the *caffè* tables are swarms of children, ill-combed and dirty, but by no means in tatters, (mostly boys, thank heaven!) whose apparent calling is to wait patiently for the stump of the half-penny Cavour cigar you are smoking, but who look you wistfully in the face as the foul weed grows "small by degrees and beautifully less"; and if by your look (for they are all as good physiognomists as dogs) they think you good-natured, they stretch out their hand with a familiar nod for a lump of sugar out of your coffee-tray. These urchins the *caffè* customer has all the time on his right and left, and even dodging like cats under his legs. The

waiters, uneasy about stray coppers, their own perquisites, or even about Christophle spoons, make sudden and fierce *razzias* among them; but to what purpose if the little Arabs—"young Barabbases," they call them—come back swarming and buzzing like flies or wasps, and the customers look benevolently on them, and the cigar-stump, and the sugar lump, with an occasional unsolicited copper, are sooner or later forthcoming?

Close upon the heels of this juvenile gang, a bevy of flower-girls, flower-women, and even flower-old-women, are flitting from bench to bench, with slovenly, long-trailing garments, stooping over you with a grimace that is meant for a smile, and thrusting a faded pink into your button-hole before you are aware of their intentions. Next comes a band of hawkers and pedlars, itinerant venders of cheap wares, cheap stationery, gloves and neck-ties, alabaster candlesticks, marble paper-weights, discoloured prints, lithographs, photographs, damaged furs, newspapers, blue spectacles, fans and umbrellas, kettles and warming-pans, every article in or out of season, the pushing pedlar shoving his pack on your table, lifting the lid of his box under your nose, eager for a bargain, giving you a choice, inviting you to name a price. You push him back, of course, you decline his offers, he knows it; the dialogue or pantomime is *de rigueur*, conventional; but he is aware of the uses of importunity—he knows his own mind, if you do not yours. He

means to sell, even if you object to be "sold"; and you listen, you answer—and are lost.

And, all the time, above the talk of the tables, the calling of the waiters, the screaming of the children, the gabble of the hawkers, the chaff and banter of the crowd, there arise the squeak of the fiddle, the scratching of the mandoline, the grating of the hurdy-gurdy, the discord of two, three or more companies of strolling musicians, besetting the threshold of the coffee-shop at its various entrances—a pandemonium of vocal and instrumental concerts which, especially in the evening, allows you no respite. And by way of variety the stentorian voice of a rogue of a patterer, poet or orator, who has learnt a few lines by heart, and goes about "extemporizing" them from place to place, living upon them from month to month, never at a loss for gaping audiences, and reaping a copper harvest sufficiently ample to provide him with a black suit and white cravat, in which he goes about like a very "seedy" but very respectable Methodist preacher.

There is not even a pretence of looking upon those hawkers as real traders or of dignifying those players into *bonâ fide* musicians. It is all rank beggary under the thinnest disguise. But the customers of the *caffè*, the well-to-do people, do not object to the nuisance. It breaks through the monotony of existence; it gives them something to look at, something to think of; it is now and then

suggestive of a mild joke or it provokes a petty disturbance; it helps to kill a minute out of an interminable hour; it also sets off the contrast between the well-to-do people who have something to give, and the "poor devils" who are so glad to receive. There is something of the "*Suave-mari-magno*" feeling about it. It above all things illustrates that "live and let live" principle, which lies at the base of a Milanese's political, moral and economical faith. I have seen the waiters of the Caffè Biffi heartily tired of the famous fourteen lines with which they have been daily pestered by one of the most impudent varlets of the *improvvisatore* class—lines which he had borrowed from a journal at the time of Manzoni's funeral, and on which he has contrived to thrive all this twelvemonth,—I have seen the waiters, I said, after fruitless intimations of their own, set the *questurini*, or police officers at him, denouncing him as a "vagabond and charlatan," and requesting the nuisance to be removed; but the agents of the public force were expostulated with and gently pushed aside by the good-natured customers, who took the rascal under their protection, professing themselves delighted with his patter, and after being friendly and suasive with the police, turned upon the *fattorini*, or waiters, with savage fury, abused them as spies and informers, and upbraided them with hard-heartedness because they interfered with a "poor devil" honestly earning his bread.

It is thus that in Italy, and especially Milan, a sneaking sympathy with mendicancy still lingers. The principal coffee-shops hire excellent bands, and give first-rate concerts every evening. But that is in the way of business. Besides that, all bungling players on instruments, all cracked vocal performers are welcomed at the *caffè* doors and in its interior. You may not see, hear or notice them, their puny notes may be utterly lost in the surrounding din; but at the end of the sorry performance the pewter saucer goes round all the same, and whether or not you know what it is for, you are expected not to suffer it to go empty away. It comes natural to the Milanese to give, no matter on what ground they are asked, and it would be vain to represent to them that by their indiscriminate liberality they encourage and create sturdy mendicancy, while they perhaps leave real, silent, undemonstrative misery unrelieved.

Not many days ago I was with some Milanese of a different character. I saw some of the *Villeggianti*, at their country seats in the Brianza and the Lake of Como. I was staying with some friends at Stresa, when they proposed to take me to see an Italian regatta. We rowed across the lake from Stresa to Laveno, and drove from this latter place to Varese and Como. It was autumn, the season of the *Sagre*, and the rural population of the district were pursuing religion as the sport of the season. All along the road we met joyous crowds in their

rustic finery, trudging on foot for eight or ten miles to pay their devotion to the Sacro Monte of Varese. Tottering old men and tender young women bowed wearily under the weight of crosses, Madonnas and other stage properties, intended for the pageant of the procession on the hill. They had to withstand several smart showers in their progress; but even the "plentiful moisture," which rumpled their ringlets and draggled their petticoats, had no power to damp the fine spirits of these chattering, laughing, romping country beauties. There is hardly a village in this luxuriant lake region that does not boast its "Holy Mount" or "Calvary"; hardly a sharp mountain-top that is not dotted with its white chapel of some *Madonna del Sasso* or *Madonna della Neve*. And every Saint has its day; and from sanctuary to sanctuary the interchange of friendly devotional visits is incessant throughout the season. As I reached Como in the evening there came steamers ashore with passengers in such multitudes as I hardly ever saw thronging a Greenwich or Gravesend boat on a Saturday afternoon. They were the peasantry of the environs on their way back from a "function" at Tremezzina, a hallowed spot on the lonely hillside along the lake. There is not even the pretence of pious feeling on such occasions. The good people have their "treat," and they bless the Virgin who affords it so genuine and so cheap. To many of them the *Sagra* is the one day in the year, and it

makes up for a life of labour, of privation and pinching poverty. The Church which takes care of their souls supplies that much recreation to their bodies.

But Como "saw another sight" on the following day, when the "cream of the cream" of the villa population took to the water to enjoy the yearly regatta. The banks of the Lake of Como have no roads, and the gentry who can keep no carriages depend on fancy and pleasure boats for locomotion almost as exclusively as the Venetians do on gondolas. Many of the young gentlemen have their pretensions to skill as sailors; and, in obedience to the spirit of association which has set in in Lombardy upon its release from Austrian rule, they have formed a kind of lake Yacht Club, of which Humbert Prince of Piedmont is the honorary Commodore. There were sailing and rowing matches on the lake last year and the year before, and the Como Regatta has risen to the importance of a local institution.

We were kindly asked by the Club to join them on board the Lombardia, one of the new saloon boats plying on the lake, chartered by them for the race week—a magnificent steamer on the American model, built at Zurich, and unmatched for speed, for comfort and beauty. We were not many as we left Como, but we stopped at Villa d'Este, Torno, Carate, Cadenabbia and Bellaggio, so that by the time we reached Gittana, the starting-point for the

race, we had as much of the nobility and beauty of Lombardy on board as the lake can boast—gallant and high-spirited young men, mostly in their dark-blue semi-naval Club uniform, and a bevy of young ladies not to be matched in Italy, unless it be in Rome, and not in Europe, unless it be in England.

If I begin, in naming them, *honoris causâ*, with the Contessina Taverna, the daughter of Count Ludovico, it is not because I presume to award to her the palm over the rival beauties, it is only because it could come into no man's fancy to give that splendid creature the second place. But there were three sisters in striped pink-and-white muslin frocks equally entitled to the golden apple—three Marchesine Trotti, all bordering on "sweet seventeen," and round whom frisked two younger sisters, mere buds, which are, some eight or nine years hence, to ripen into flowers worthy of the same stalk. These five sisters come of a stock where female beauty is an heirloom; they are nieces or grand-nieces of that Christina Trivulzio Belgioioso whom Europe admired and Austria dreaded—a conspirator, a wit, a heroine. In close intimacy with these was the Signorina Cagnola, the Deputy's daughter. There was a Marchesa Trivulzio, two Contesse Raimondi, sisters of that errant damsel who acted for one day the part of Garibaldi's bride at Varese, in 1859, and who still, I am told, bears the hero's name. Clustering on the deck, on the other

side, I saw the Signora Ricordi, two Signore Tommasini; and alone, apart from the rest, with two attendant cavaliers, sat the Contessa Zucchini, of Bologna. This countess was the only lady present a stranger to Lombardy, and seemed to be studiously shunned by the whole female company, the why and wherefore of which I did not inquire. There were no Transalpine ladies, except three Mademoiselles d'Anethan, nieces of the Belgian Minister, by no means the least, though the last, in the roll of beauty.

You must not ask me wherein the peculiar charm of these fair Lombard ladies resides. They have the rich, healthy complexion of their English sisters; the mass of light brown or blonde hair of the Germans, from whom many of them claim remote descent; the full, short, rosy lips, the dazzling rows of pearly teeth, which are the badge of loveliness all the world over; but they have, besides all that, eyes and figures of their own—the large, dreamy eyes, the round, loose lithe figures, indigenous to the soil and climate. We are here on the skirts of the Alps, where the North and South join hands. As you see in the gardens on the borders of these lakes the blended vegetation of various latitudes, so you find in the households the mixed types of different races. Whatever embellishes other countries is at home here; it finds a neutral ground, as it were, a genial temperature suiting all seeds and enhancing all growth. The cooler

season, the air of the lake, the gossamer summer dress, the bare heads (for they were here on board as at home), the excitement of the hour—everything seemed intended to set these Lombard women off to the best advantage. There is a frank, confiding, affectionate expression in their countenances, arising probably from their habitual comparative seclusion. Most of the ladies who were present were unmarried, many of them *Tose* and *Tosette*, hardly of age. Girls here do go out, but not much, and their intercourse with the other sex is chiefly with men with whom they live on terms of domestic intimacy. There is no coyness or coquetry, no sly "consciousness," among them. They are free, natural, somewhat voluble in conversation, but well-bred, cordial, and, as a rule, rather with the germ than the development of intellectual faculties. On board the steamer we were almost *en famille*. These girls were in the care of brothers and other male relatives; they had for this one day left mothers and governesses at home, and needed no other protection than their beauty and innocence.

Let me tell you, *en passant*, that the improvement of domestic relations with respect to the conduct of women, is one of the most pleasing features exhibited by Italy in her emancipated state.

There had been glorious showers, with the usual accompaniment of thunder, during the whole night at Como, and we were under a general apprehen-

sion that the weather might mar the sports of the day. But the frowns of an Italian sky are seldom permanent, and as we steamed from the wharf a little after ten the clouds went asunder, and a fresh breeze from the north gave promise of propitious weather. As we neared the starting-point at Gittana however the provoking wind dropped, and it was almost a dead calm when the race began.

It was a slow race. There were seven boats, little yachts or cutters (*canotti*, they call them here), drawn up on one line, awaiting the signal. They were—

Fanfulla . .	Antonio Cavagna Sangiuliani.
Fantasma . .	Eugenio Besana.
Giulia . .	Erminio Vogel.
Flying Fish . .	Enrico Besana.
Silvia . . .	Ludovico Trotti.
Vulcano . .	Aristide Rubini.
Water Baby . .	W. H. Atkinson.

They had drawn lots for places, the outer boats towards the centre of the lake having a clear advantage. The boats were to sail north from Gittana, almost opposite to Menaggio, to a central spot between Dervio and Rezzonico, a distance of about four kilomètres, and to make their way back to the starting-point at Gittana. The Silvia took the lead, and kept it throughout the upward course—the usual luck, I am told, with the Marchese Trotti—the father of the "Five Sisters"—who, however, never wins more than half the race. The boats

were more than one hour creeping up with flapping sails and scattered far and wide all over the expanse of the lake. But as they turned to the south, and, upon coming off the lee of the mountain-mass of the Legnone, caught the first breath of the faintly reviving wind, something like a stir became perceptible among them, and the tug of war began in good earnest. The Fantasma—Eugenio Besana—gave up the game, and falling astern, was taken in tow by us. There was, for about half an hour, a fair contest between the Fanfulla and the Water Baby.; but partly owing to the superior build of the boat, partly to the abler steering and tacking of its master, it all ended in an easy victory for the Water Baby, which came in a quarter of an hour before its opponent.

The winner, Mr. Atkinson, a tradesman in the Milan Gallery, and who also carries on business on the Lakes Maggiore and Como, is, or was, a member of the Royal London Yacht Club, and is an old hand at all aquatic sports and exercises. The Water Baby was built in France for the Princess Mathilde, and a glance at her rakish cut and shape, and the enormous sail she carried, ought to have satisfied the bystanders that her rivals had little chance with her. The Fanfulla, which had won every match in previous years on this lake might, in more skilful hands, have come in a better second. But the fact is that the Milanese youth are mere amateur boatmen; they are only on the lake for two or three

months of their *villeggiatura*, and their training for the contest does not engage them for more than a very few days. Mr. Atkinson, on the contrary, besides his long English experience, is always on the water, and he goes to work in that thorough, persevering English way which alone can command success. He met with a cordial reception as he came on board to receive his prize at the hands of the President of the Club. There was not a shadow either of jealousy or mortification among these good-natured Lombards, for it seemed quite intelligible that an Englishman should have the better of them on what has been so long his own element. The Italians race for the mere honour and "fun" of the thing. The betting is inconsiderable—all is carried on with chivalrous disinterestedness, and hospitable friendliness and cordiality.

It is not impossible that the easy triumph a stranger obtained over them may stimulate the mettle and ambition of these amiable Milanese gentlemen; but in the meanwhile it is something to find that anything like love of manly exercise, spirit of enterprise and association, and wholesome emulation, are reviving among them. It is with the same satisfaction that one hears of bicycle matches at Florence, of a field of hunting princes, nobles, and *Mercanti di Campagna* in Rome, of horse-races, steeplechases and Alpine Clubs in almost every city. The Austrians and the Pope had found the means of proscribing or excommunicating all in-

vigorating games, indigenous or imported, even the manly *Giuoco del Pallone*, an old Italian trial of strength and agility, which I still remember as a national institution in my youth, and to which the high-minded Leopardi dedicated one of his noblest Pindaric Odes.

With stronger and healthier bodies these youths of Northern Italy are rapidly acquiring more active and sounder minds. The improvement in the physical and moral character, especially of the higher classes of the Lombard population, is undeniable. A wish to protest against the presence of the Austrians in their cities had in later times induced many of the best families to prolong their residence in their country houses. What was at first a political demonstration has become a domestic habit. The *villeggiatura* spreads now over one-half, and in some cases almost the whole year, with great benefit to the health of the landowner and the condition of the labourer, and consequently with a considerable increase of their mutual intercourse and the promotion of their common interests. The Lombard nobles are learning business habits. They are all bent on making fifteen per cent. out of silk; they attend fairs and markets, are particular about the breeds of horses and cattle, and launch into all sorts of schemes about draining marshes, reclaiming waste lands, replanting forests, importing and applying foreign agricultural implements, and the discoveries of foreign husbandry. They travel

more than they used to do, pay more attention to modern European languages, and court English, French and even German and Russian matrimonial alliances. They marry earlier, live more at home, and, as I hinted, there is a notable improvement in all domestic relations, especially in connexion with the marriage tie. The mere fact that young men have now something else to aspire to besides the favours to be obtained by dangling about married women, may account for the pleasing fact. The whole style and tenor of Italian conversation is changed. Instead of flat opera criticism, of ribald personal scandal, business is now the all-absorbing, never-ending topic. It used to be politics, but that has somewhat palled lately, or it has assumed a local, almost a parochial character. The favourite career from Solferino to Custozza was the army; but, after 1866, it has been stripped of the charm that prospective war gave it, and the epaulettes have now little attraction, at least for youths of high rank and fortune. We often have here old heads on young shoulders, mere striplings giving much of their time to a variety of social, economical and moral questions, capable of immediate, or only of remote solution, and closely affecting abstract principles as well as practical interests. Possibly we hear a great deal too much of financial schemes, we see too many prospectuses of every kind of industrial and commercial speculation, of railways, canals, coal-mines, and navigation companies. The

material results are not always encouraging. Many of the bubbles burst. In frequent instances the ardour of the beginning is not attended by a corresponding constancy in the sequel. There are often in Italy, as in other countries, hot and cold fits of the share-market fever—mad confidence—senseless panic; but it is clear gain to have raised Italy, even in that respect, to a level with other civilized communities, and to have brought her into a more frequent and general contact and more ready sympathy with them—to have added a nation as well as a state to Europe. It is clear gain to have given the Italians something to do, something to think of and to talk about, something to arouse them from that sloth, and indolence, and mental vacuity which for centuries constituted the normal state of their existence.

A wondrous change has been wrought by the events of 1859 in the character of the people of Milan. I was here in 1848, on the morrow of those famous "Five Days" of March, when an unarmed multitude spirited away Radetzky and all his array of big cannon. I was here again in 1859, the day after Villafranca, when the Barabbases, furious against the Emperor Napoleon for what they called his "sale of Venetia" would certainly have torn him to pieces, had not his person been screened by the presence of that "Corporal of Zouaves," Victor Emmanuel, who sat by his side in the same open carriage, and whom the populace pitied and loved as the first and fore-

most victim of the French monarch's treason. On that sad day the Milanese for the first time learnt to hold their tongue and control their fury; and the Imperial vehicle was suffered to go down the Corso without one cheer but also without the least attempt at the threatened violence.

Since that day the Milanese have been a new race of men—the most sober, the least excitable, apparently the most apathetic people in Italy, only anxious to turn to sober earnest the sneer with which the Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph made them over to their new master, giving him joy of "the quiet, docile, loyal and orderly flock he had undertaken to govern." There is no town in Italy that more readily "takes things as they come," that more assiduously minds its own business, or is more entirely engrossed with the cares of its own material embellishment and social improvement. The Milanese read, print and think almost as much as all the rest of the Italians put together.

I have alluded to the visit the Shah paid to the city and to the little commotion that his presence created among the listless population. Their reception must have seemed very cold to the Asiatic monarch after all the boisterous greeting of Turin. The Milanese simply illuminated their gallery *a giorno*, and got up a display of electric fires on the roof of their cathedral. What made this latter exhibition unique was only the unique beauty of the sacred building itself. Those hundreds of marble

pinnacles, those thousands of statues, gargoyles, flying buttresses, quaint fretwork and lace-work ornaments, which make the Duomo a wonder of wonders of Gothic architecture, even in the glare of day and in their pure whiteness, assumed a magic appearance as they glowed and actually seemed to melt in the crimson light which gradually spread over and at last wholly wrapt and penetrated them. The grand edifice was like a city of Dis, with the red-hot towers and minarets imagined by Dante. But for the calmness and purity of the air and the unmixed delight of the awed spectators, one would have said that the noble pile was really on fire and slowly consuming, and that the crash of the crumbling roof might be expected at any moment. It was fire and yet not fire. There was neither flame nor smoke, and the silence was unbroken. The great church was simply perishing from internal combustion, or rather it glowed and melted as if it were perishing, and yet emerged from that fiery ordeal as if only re-tempered, and presently stood out in the pale moonlight unhurt and indestructible.

It was worth while to go to Italy merely to see the outside of the Milan minster that evening; and it would have still better repaid the journey to have seen the inside of it on the day of Manzoni's interment. That was the day of days for new Milan. I came up on the eve from Rome in a long train and was met at every railway junction by long trains conveying to the same place the *élite* of the

"Hundred Cities" of the Peninsula. Italy would not allow Milan monopoly of mourning. The nation came to claim its noblest genius, its most unblemished character, as common property. Literature and Art were for centuries the bond of union among a people enslaved by divisions; they must now constitute the main link of that unity for which they knew how to suffer and to wait. It might seem almost affectation to speak of mourning for a life which had come to so mature an end; it might even be construed into rebellion against man's common lot of mortality. Manzoni died at the age of eighty-eight. The tenor of his days was uneventful, and only disturbed by such domestic bereavements and afflictions as must needs be the Nemesis of longevity. The work appointed to him was over many years since. The "last fruits off the old tree" had long been gathered, and they added little if anything to the poet's fame. Of no man could it be said with more justice that he has "died twice." The work that was in him was done in his earlier years. Men who are now considered old were in the prime of youth when the 'Adelchi,' and 'Carmagnola,' the 'Inni Sacri,' and the 'Promessi Sposi,' touched a new chord in the Italian lyre. The 'Cinque Maggio' appeared almost before the body of the prisoner of St. Helena was cold in its grave, and that was more than half a century before the bard's own decease. Manzoni could hardly have been a greater man if he had done

more than that, but he would perhaps have been greater if he had never meddled with what he had done. Nature had made him a poet—he aspired to be a scholar; he had been gifted with thoughts and feelings—he condescended to trifle with words. Instead of writing new works, he toiled at the old ones till he spoilt them to the best of his power.

Manzoni stood so high among his contemporaries, that it ought to have seemed idle, even on his open grave, to attempt to add to his stature. His countrymen, however, with their wonted propensity to transcend all limits, allowed him more than the meek-minded man would have taken upon himself. They honoured in him the patriot; they gave him credit for having, earlier than many men, aspired to the unity of Italy, and having finally voted it as a Senator in 1860, when the kingdom was first built on the ruins of the old Italian States, and partly on those of the Pope's Temporal Power. But Manzoni himself was too modest and truthful not to avow that, "had all men been as he was, Italy would never have been made." Italy had to be fought for, and Manzoni recoiled from all strife. The emancipation of his country was only a phase in the history of the man; and Manzoni, like Goethe, his master, was the man of all ages. His morality embraced patriotism, but extended beyond it. The Italians affect to look upon Manzoni's novel, upon his tragedies, and especially upon the three lyrics sung by the Chorus at the end of them,

as a protest against foreign domination in Italy. And they are in so far right that Manzoni was an enemy to all oppression; but he did not advise, and scarcely approved of resistance. Indeed he pitied and almost blessed the oppressor as much as the oppressed. There was not a note in his writings to rouse his countrymen to shake off the foreign domination, or even to inspire them with hope that it would ever be shaken off. "Might," says his dying hero, "rules the earth, and calls itself Right. Our forefathers have sown iniquity; our fathers have manured it with their blood, and now-a-days the earth yields no other harvest. Nothing remains but either to inflict wrong or endure it." He describes the Franks of Charlemagne driving the Longobards of Desiderius before them, and the enslaved Latin race looking up from their blind misery, and hailing the conquerors as deliverers; and he dashes their hopes to the ground by intimating that all those victories and defeats portend nothing to them but a change of yoke, or indeed the aggravation of one yoke upon another. He points to the battle-field of Maclodio strewed with the dead after a fratricidal conflict between Italians and Italians in the period of the Mediæval Republics, and warns the country, which is "too narrow to hold her children together at peace, that it must prepare to make room for the foreigner." True and salutary lessons were these, and they doubtless sank deep into Italian

hearts. But if Manzoni vividly and almost cruelly probed Italian wounds, he did not equally attempt to heal them. He almost bade the sufferers despair of cure. Where remedy could not be administered, he attempted consolation. As there was no hope on earth, he pointed to heaven. He looked to another world for the redress of whatever was wrong in this. "What gain will it be for man to have trodden and vexed his fellow-man? The vanquished alone is exempt from sorrow. The joy of the impious turns to wailing. The vengeance of Heaven may seem to bear with him in his wicked courses; but it follows him—it watches him—it bides its time—it overtakes him at his last breath."

"Beata tu mai
Terra alcuna per sangue ed oltraggio?
Solo al vinto non toccano i guai,
Torna in pianto dell' empio il gioir
Ben talor nel superbo viaggio
Non lo arresta l' eterna vendetta;
Ma lo segue, ma veglia ed aspetta,
Ma lo coglie all' estremo sospir."

The whole of Manzoni's poetry and prose is in this strain. The slave and the freeman are alike to him; for God's kingdom is not of this world, and beyond it "the Lord will call the humblest to an equal share with the loftiest, the blood of redemption having been equally shed for all Eve's children."

"Perchè baciando i pargoli
La schiava ancor sospira
E il sen che nutre i liberi
Invidiando mira?

Non sa che al Regno i miseri
Seco il Signor solleva;
Che a tutti i figli d' Eva
Nel suo dolor pensò."

But if, in its direct sense, Manzoni's religion only advised patience and submission, it indirectly had the effect of raising the moral tone of his countrymen—of making them better, and consequently braver men. Manzoni had outlived the long period of Napoleon's wars. He had seen the apotheosis of brute force; he had dived into all the illusions and delusions of his contemporaries, and perceived that Italy, by her active share in the struggle, now on the side of France, now on that of Austria, had only wrought out her misery and riveted her chains. Hope in overt action there seemed to be none; and Manzoni's grave and candid mind shrank from conspiracy. He left it to Providence to work out its own ends, and he prepared the world for the fullness of the times by promulgating principles which, without resisting evil, entered a meek yet firm and uncompromising protest against it. And the Austrians, who banished Foscolo and imprisoned Pellico, were puzzled how to deal with Manzoni; never sent a gendarme to darken his threshold; never refused the *Imprimatur* to any of his books: for to object to Manzoni's principles would have been to reject Christ's doctrines, to challenge God's justice, to refuse to acknowledge the sun in the heavens. Even Radetzky could not do that.

There must have been some dim consciousness of the important mission fulfilled by this unassuming and unsuspected apostle in the enthusiasm which summoned so vast a number of his distinguished countrymen to his burial. For several days Italy had no other business than to do homage to the memory of her dead poet. Not only was every town and borough represented at the ceremony of the 29th of May, but every university and academy, every educational and charitable establishment—social life in every rank, in every phase. Milan must have welcomed on that day some hundred thousand guests. The whole rural population of Lombardy—especially of those mountain districts where Manzoni, and the heroes of his novel, Renzo and Lucia, were at home—came down in a mass. All the broad avenues to the city were swarming with these humble pilgrims. Of the upper classes hardly any were left behind.

Milan was astir at an early hour. The Italian colours hung at every window; black cloths were spread before every balcony. The funeral ceremony was to begin at ten o'clock, and shortly before that time the mourners and all invited guests were assembled at the Marino, the Municipal Palace, where the embalmed body had been lying in state since the preceding Monday. The procession was formed. The coffin took the lead. The greatest in the land were the pall-bearers. Next followed the members of Manzoni's family; then all social orders

from highest to lowest; men in bright uniforms, men in sober mourning garb; then a multitude mustered under its flags, drawn up in guilds and companies—a procession several miles long with military bands, battalions and squadrons without end. The procession went round by some of the new streets to the Piazza del Duomo; the scaffoldings of the buildings rising round this open space were thronged with people who clung to it like bees. The beautiful cathedral, the "mountain of white marble," was before us. An immense black flag hung above the main door, bearing the arms of Manzoni, a bullock *(Manzo)* argent, on a field gules. The interior of the cathedral, grand and severe in its simplicity, is beautiful under every disguise, and in spite of every ecclesiastical ornament. But it seems made on purpose for funerals, and never looks to greater advantage than in the gloom of its darkened windows, and by the pale rays of its thousand wax tapers. Its glorious five aisles, its fretted roof, were dimly visible to our eyes still dazzled by the glare of the outside sun. We walked up the central nave to the catafalque, or pyramid of lofty steps rising immediately beneath the main dome of the edifice, and upon which the coffin which preceded us had already been laid. Over this scaffolding, from the roof, there drooped a long white flag, bearing the Red Cross of Savoy, and on either side of it long sable streamers bearing the dead man's arms. The officiating clergy, with the

archbishop and the chief mourners and guests, passed on to the choir, where seats were prepared for them. It was a whole mob of Senators, Deputies, Generals, Syndics, Magistrates, and Princes of the Blood and the King's household. Men's attention was for some time attracted to the countenance and bearing of Amadeo, Duke of Aosta, at that time just returned from Spain, whom no one designated as "ex-King," and whom all were glad to see here again at an Italian public meeting. The Prince had grown in strength, and one would almost have said in height; his full black beard gave him a manly look, which, it seemed natural to fancy, scarcely hid an air of depression and melancholy contrasting with the bolder and more animated but dissipated look of his elder brother, Humbert, Prince of Piedmont, and with the serene and placid aspect of his burly cousin, the Prince of Carignano.

The vast assembly were all in their places and seated when the first notes of the Mass for the dead were heard. There was nothing very remarkable either in the style of the service or of the chant which accompanied it. Only in the frequent intervals between the strains of solemn music, and in the profound silence which ensued, the hum of the vast multitude assembled outside broke in through the lofty open portals, and it had all the subdued roar, all the awful harmony of a distant ocean.

CHAPTER IX.

AN ITALIAN SUMMER.

Lake Maggiore—Stresa—Summer Showers—North Italian Climate—Summer in the Country—Summer in Town—How to bear Heat—Summer Holiday Life—Spread of Italian Well-being.

It has been providentially ordained that men's tastes should differ, else I might have the whole world crowding upon me on Lago Maggiore, and in this particular spot of Stresa, the multitude putting all idea of enjoyment for myself or others altogether out of the question. I have found here the "*nec tumultus, nec solitudo*" which comes up to the ideal of an earthly paradise. Not many years ago Stresa was unknown land. For those who had a few days or weeks to consecrate to the unmatched beauties of the Verbano, Pallanza offered the only endurable winter residence, and Baveno afforded the only enjoyable summer retreat. Stresa boasted nothing besides a modest, not uncomfortable, and moderately clean Italian inn, with a courteous and not ungenial landlord. An ascetic philosopher, Rosmini, and an æsthetic princess, the Duchess of Genoa, had pitched their tents here. Men hailed as they passed the Monastic Academy on the hill, whence the Tyrolese

priest vainly strove to show Pius IX. how to reconcile religious with liberal ideas, and even more unsuccessfully endeavoured to drive logic into the vast but muddled brain of the Abate Gioberti; or they gazed at the fair lady's bower on the lake shore, where the daughter of King John of Saxony withdrew for a long season from the dull etiquette of the Court of Turin, and from the vast loneliness of her castle of Agliè. By degrees however the idea that Stresa was the finest spot on Lago Maggiore, and that Maggiore was the lake of lakes on either side of the Alps, began to force itself on men's minds. All that Stresa wanted was some such caravanserai as the Beaurivage on lake Leman, and it has now the *Albergo delle Isole Borromee.*

Is Maggiore the most beautiful of Alpine lakes? The Leman as seen from Lausanne is a broader sheet of water; the bay of Uri, at the head of the Vierwaldstättensee, musters a more sublime group of mountains; Como has a greater variety of picturesque windings and turnings; the vegetation on Garda is more luxuriant and verdant; but Maggiore combines in a satisfactory degree the charms of all other lakes, and is liable to none of the objections that their very advantages in some respects suggest against its rivals on other grounds. It is wide, but not so wide as to make one shore indistinguishable from the other; it is mountainous, but not so rugged and severe as to overwhelm the beholder with gloom; it winds and turns, but not so inces-

santly and perversely as to intercept its own views and throw itself, as it were, in its own way.

Here, from Stresa, at the point which divides the main sheet of water from the bay of Baveno, I can look, on the north or north-east, almost up to the water-head and the double chain of mountains that shuts in the Val Levantina, ending with the giant mass of the St. Gotthard. On the west, or north-west, the view ranges above Baveno into Val d' Ossola and the snowy summits of the Simplon Pass. The two great thoroughfares to Lucerne and Geneva are laid out before me in all their grandeur. And if I want a more vast and distinct panorama, I need only climb up to the Monterme, the Italian Righi, the hill in my rear, when a three or four hours' walk or ride lays before me, besides a whole zone of lakes, the Alpine chain from Mont Blanc to the Oertler-Spitz, with Monte Rosa at the cross of the diadem; while on the other side I behold the whole plain of North Italy, with its "hundred cities" dotting its interminable green, spread at my feet like a map, with the Apennine for its extreme border, and the sheen of the Mediterranean wave beyond it.

The earth however is only the body of the beauty; its soul is the Italian summer sun which lights up its features, elicits its ineffable smile, softens its bold outlines with its endless shades, and relieves their sameness by the perpetual play of its beams. I can ask for no greater joy than to gaze before me from my window, or from the hote

terrace, as the day declines, and the mountain-mass on my right and left melts, as it were, in the summer haze, and dissolves into ridge after ridge, and cliff above cliff, a maze of mountains of unequalled shape and structure, all bathing in a blended flood of gorgeous pearl and purple hues. Common-place and even vulgar-minded are some of my fellow mortals now staying at this place, but an evening-fall like this makes the whole world kin. For a few minutes you see the *ménagerie*, which has just risen from table after feeding time, and gathers in groups on the terrace, awed and abashed into silence by the loveliness of the scene arrayed in heavenly glory before them.

We have all here that Italy can boast; we have nothing of what men object to in Italy—a hot glaring sun, but partially shaded by the huge phantom clouds that hover and roll above us, clinging to the mountain summits; a heavy sweltering heat, but tempered by the breeze from the broad Alpine valleys, and assuaged by a dip into the pure water of the lake, with not a little of the coolness of the glaciers from which it flows. The drought is long and incessant, yet our pastures are as green as in England, and there is delicious shade under the dense chestnut groves that mantle the hill-sides a long way to the summit, and from which cool rivulets trickle down, gathered here and there in tanks to slake the thirst of the passers-by. Finally, we have still water close to our windows; yet we

are free from those gnats or mosquitoes which make life a burden in many other Italian districts.

For the first time since Midsummer we have had to-day what may be called a thorough fall of rain. It began last evening at sunset with a great display of electric fireworks; and shower has come upon shower, with little intermission, ever since. This is the 19th day of August, and we have been looking for rain ever since the 15th. The most peculiar character of North Italy—by which name I designate the region lying between the Alps and the Apennines—is its regularity. Milan, Turin, and Bologna have in this respect nothing in common with Rome or Naples, with Florence or Genoa. On the sea-coast, as far as the influence of the sea-breeze is felt, you have a genial but fickle, perpetual spring. But Piedmont, Lombardy and the Emilia are fenced in on the north and south by two great mountain-barriers, and it is only by a great, earnest and continued effort that either the chill Tramontana or the heavy sirocco can reach them. But, on the other hand, when either of these scourges has overstepped the natural boundary, it makes itself at home in the plain and revels on it. We all know here what we may look forward to in the way of weather. The Roman Calendar was made for us, and the seasons really begin and end when they are bidden. March winds and April showers are no myths here, nor Arctic ice in January, nor torrid heat in July. The popular proverbs assigning

peculiar Saints' days for the various phases of the year are seldom at fault. "*Alla prima acqua d'Agosto, pover uomo, io ti conosco,*" tells us that the time in which it did not in the least matter whether you have a cloak, and whether you put on linen or woollen clothes, is at an end. The first good soaking August shower marks the period of transition from the intense to the moderate summer heat. The date appointed in the almanack is Assumption Day. This year the phenomenon has, as I said, been delayed nearly a week; but we had sure promise of it in the heavy clouds which have been for several days hugging the mountains, and every evening tantalizing us with a glare of lightning and a roll of thunder which foretokened the deluge, and never vouchsafed drops enough to lay the dust. For this last week, too, the tidings of an *acquazzone* (a real downpour), cheering now this, now that, fortunate remote district, reached us. Our turn was sure to come. Those distant storms were the first skirmishers, the forerunners of the host that was advancing upon us in close array. But by this time we are prepared for the general invasion, and there is an end of the summer drought.

The North Italian plain lies between the forty-fourth and forty-sixth degrees of north latitude, equidistant from the Pole and the Line; it has, therefore, neither the long days nor the long nights of more northern latitudes; and consequently, whatever may be the strength of the sun by day, it is

tempered by the benign influence of the night. September is the loveliest month of the year throughout Europe; but it is especially so here, where the parched earth seems to break out into a new spring, and where we have all the freshness of youth to clothe and deck out the decay of the waning year. Here the leaves wither and drop, one by one, seldom nipped all at once by sudden frosts or vexed by stormy blasts. The atmosphere between these two mountain-chains is in the fall wondrously still; the beauty of the summer lingers among us throughout every phase of the autumnal changes; it gains upon us with every hue of the wilting foliage, with every degree of the falling temperature. No Italian who can help it leaves the country before November. With St. Martin's Day, the 11th of that month, the real wretchedness of winter may be expected to set in: drizzling rains, chilly fogs, gloom and misery till Christmas; then cutting winds, and bright but severe frosts till Easter; dusty gales in March; then balmy breezes and tepid showers with the thawing of mountain snows in April. By Whitsuntide—"Pasqua Rosa," or Rose-Easter, as it is called—the country is out in all its beauty. I came across the Alps towards the middle of May, and a more unutterable joy than I felt as the express-train whirled me across the country, dressed, as it then was, in all the freshness of its spring garb, I had not for many years experienced. But I thought that the greenness of spring would soon be over,

and that it could not withstand the long drought and the growing heat of the later season; yet I had occasion again and again to traverse the same region from end to end, and up to the close of July its verdure was not very perceptibly affected. The plain on one side at least has the benefit of an irrigation which no rays of the sun can exhaust; and away from the Alpine streams, in the Emilia and even in Tuscany, the moisture of the nightly dews lingers on the loamy soil, tempering the dryness of the air for weeks after the last speck of cloud has utterly, and apparently for ever, vanished from the sky. Heat and drought are, after all, the elements in which men and things seem best to thrive in Italy. The sky is never too bright, the sun never too blazing for us; and apparently the land is of the same way of thinking as its inhabitants. It is impossible to say what amount of thirst this deep Italian soil is able to bear. Till late in July the total cessation of rain creates no uneasiness; for the great reservoirs, even in the Apennines, are not yet exhausted, and snow does not disappear from their crest till midsummer. The wheat harvest, even in Southern Italy, seldom fails to be reaped and garnered ere the sun has time to burn it up, and the parching of the foliage does rather good than harm to the vine and fruit trees. It is surprising, as one wakes up in the train after a long journey through the sultry night, to see, clinging to the vine and mulberry which give the

field the look of a tangled forest, the thick white mist soon to dissolve and clear off before the first sunbeams, but leaving its diamond drops to glitter for a short hour on the thirsty foliage, and drenching and freshening the rank herbage underneath. It is marvellous to see by what contrivances Nature endeavours to make the best of her difficulties; and it is to be regretted that man should so often interfere with her, and that in this Italy, for instance, where the deep earth so admirably corrects the inclemency of the burning sky, its moisture-giving powers should have been so cruelly curtailed by the wanton destruction of vast tracts of mountain-forest.

The travellers who yearly visit Italy seldom choose the seasons of the year and the districts of the country in which the climate shows to the best advantage. The winter in the north, although short, is no doubt exceedingly severe, and the three hours' railway journey from Turin to Genoa often in January or February wafts a traveller almost from a Siberian into an African atmosphere. But even the mildest climates in Italy—those of Genoa, Rome or Naples—are sufficiently trying in winter, and there are but imperfect domestic arrangements to enable a man to endure the dreary rains and vexing winds which by fits and starts visit those maritime paradises. For spring and autumn, the constant inland region is infinitely preferable; and as for summer, though the heat is

certainly trying, there is no reason why man, like any other living creature, or like any plant, should not best thrive in it. It is delightful to see with what rapidity shrubs barely planted at the time of my last visit, twelve years ago, have now shot up into lofty forest timber. There is no reason why man should not attain in this climate the most robust and healthy development. It is no trifling privilege to live, as we do here, in the open air for nine months in the year, not merely moving in it, hunting, shooting or deer-stalking, as men do in England, but actually living and breathing leisurely in it—sitting, reclining, eating and sleeping in it. For a man in good health I am convinced that extreme heat and cold, within certain limits, are highly beneficial, and the hardships of both extremes are to be overcome by the same means—that of regular wholesome exercise. In Italy, away from the towns, the summer heat never seems to me overpowering or prostrating unless I give in to it. Most people of a certain rank in this country contract idle, indolent habits, which render them mere slaves of atmospheric influences. A snort of their winter breezes, or a flash of their summer sun, is a lion in their path, forbidding any venture out of doors. But the whole of their rural and industrial population is there to give the lie to the assertion that either biting frost or parching heat is unfavourable to strong bodily or mental exercise. They have only to try; seize the bull by the horns;

take a stroll of ten or twelve miles along the shore of this lake, or up some winding path on the hill-side, choosing the very hottest hours of the fore or after noon for the experiment. I can warrant them that reaction against their laxity of limbs will soon set in, and they will have little reason to complain of the heat or of the *fiaccona* or laziness they think it brings with it for the rest of the day. *Experto crede.*

I have said however, "within certain limits," and "away from the towns," for I have somewhat formidable recollections of what I have outlived in some of the North Italian cities, particularly in Turin. The summer is short there, because gigantic vapours hover about the crest of the Alps, and rise higher and higher all through May, June and July, the hotter the sun darts its rays at them, and the streams from the mountain glaciers flow more copiously and impetuously the more fiercely the air from that reeking Subalpine furnace rushes up to them; and all the plain and the hill side are flooded, and the country blooms, and the meadows thrive under the glare that vainly strives to scorch them; and the night is chill, the morning cool, the evening damp; and the sunbeams have to struggle for hours before they break through the gauze-like curtain of mist, and rob the grass and foliage of their moisture. The north gives long and stout battle to the summer-god in the Subalpine region; but at last the dog-days (*Sol-lione*, as it is here called) set in; the sun carries the victory, the faint

white haze which lingered in the air clears off, the sky assumes its deep, transparent Italian hues, the mountains are stripped of their rolling, swelling, shifting clouds, and their peaks rear themselves up in the sky with distinct outlines, as if carved out of the firmament, and hardly dimmed by fifty or sixty miles' distance through the medium of a thoroughly dried, painfully rarefied atmosphere.

For eight or ten weeks the sky is as limpid as anywhere in Italy, but the heat is greater, because less tempered by even the faintest breath of air. The whole of Piedmont is boxed in in the narrowest part of the valley of the Po, and Turin is besides hemmed in by Superga and the other hills which come close to the very first houses of the suburb across the river. Turin is, as I have said, an open town, less of a town than any in the world, all open to the country, all green at the end, all ready to welcome any whiff of air that Providence may send; but none is sent; down from the north, never a breath; from the south, only at times a hot, heavy furnace blast of sirocco; but for long long hours, morning, noon and night, there is dead stagnant air, stewing heat, stifling people in their very beds; men drag themselves along at a snail's pace, under the porticoes, seeking the coolest spot, and will go miles out of their way to avoid a sunny crossing twenty yards in length. Step from shade to sunlight, and the fiery glare swallows you up, wraps you in; you feel as if you had plunged into a

seething cauldron, your eyes are blinded, your skin tingles, your brain is in a blaze. Linger in the *Piazza d'Armi* till eight or nine o'clock in the evening; over that vast level space, from that lofty mountain circle, there is not as much wind as a bird would raise by flapping its wings. Go back to-morrow to the same spot, at four, five, or any time before sunrise, and earth and sky are equally unmoved, equally immovable. The granite bench you sit upon preserves still the latent glow from yesterday's sun; the huge blocks of buildings, or *Isole*, round the Piazza still radiate yesterday's heat. And to-day's heat will add to yesterday's and the day's before; layer upon layer, the air will weigh upon us, till, as the Italians say, the heat bursts *(crepa il caldo)*, and the seasons, which seemed to be at a standstill, go their round again.

One might ask, how do people live under such circumstances? Why, to bear the heat is business enough for most of them. They drag themselves, as I said, under the porticoes, loll upon stools before the *caffè* shop-doors, they call for ice, and more ice, and talk of the blessings of out-of-town existence. But out of town all is not paradise either; there are musty, fusty railway carriages, slow diligences, roads with the dust fathoms deep, an aggravation of the same misery in endless variety. The luckiest mortals run up to the hills and lakes, to the water-cure establishments of Pesio and Oropa, the baths of Valdieri, the rugged

homes of Viu, the sea-bathing places at Sestri or Spezia. But the very sea, that tideless sea, has no coolness, and the valleys are closer, therefore hotter, than the plain. Summer will sometimes reach up to the very Alpine summit, though it be but for a short spell, and then the panting fugitives must go further back, from the Italian to the Swiss Alps, often from an oven to a furnace, from the frying-pan into the fire.

And yet, so far as my experience goes, I insist that even such a heat is greatly beneficial to the human frame. It must be fought, I believe, by the same weapons by which cold is overcome—by strong, manly exertion. If I give in to it, I am soon languid, listless, with hardly strength enough left to lift the cooling lemonade to my lips. But if I drink no lemonade, eschew ice, take my meals regularly without consulting my appetite, then move about at my usual brisk pace, take the sunny or the shady side of the road indifferently, and give preference to steep ascents,—if I determine not to mind but to despise the heat, and defy it,—a new life seems to rise within me. Nor am I by any means an exception, or only in so far that battling with the summer is matter of choice with me; but I see men splitting stones along the sunny highway, I see carters walking stoutly beside their teams, I see troops, both foot and horse, marching across the *Piazza d'Armi* at their wonted pace, the Bersaglieri at their double quick-step; they seem,

all of them, as strong and merry as in December, only a little more flushed; and one may wager they are all the healthier for being somewhat leaner and lighter. Nature is nowhere at fault, and I have no doubt gives us Italians skulls thick enough to protect our brains from our sun, as it provides the negroes with still stronger frontal and occipital bones to enable them to withstand that of Africa.

A proof that heat need not keep the Italians from work may be inferred from the fact that heat is never a hindrance to their pleasure. Only let a procession of the Corpus Domini be mentioned, and you see the whole multitude astir, eager to go forth, it little matters whether as actors or spectators in the show—the women in all the paraphernalia of chignon and crinoline, the men with their confraternity hood and sack over their Sunday best, the very priest stifled by surplice, stole, alb, cope and chasuble, groaning under a load of crucifix or wooden Madonna, his torch and taper mocking the sun's rays as they dart almost vertically on his bare shaven pate.

Neither is the heat a drawback to locomotion in Italy, so long as amusement of any kind is to be procured by it. The crowds I have with me as I travel from Milan to Arona, on my way to the lake on a Saturday afternoon, often delay the train for more than an hour. They are people of all classes, of both sexes, citizens and soldiers, priests and laymen, all anxious for a breath of fresh air, all out for

a twenty-four hours' enjoyment of their weekly holiday. And for every ten who have the leisure and means to venture so far as Lake Maggiore, there are at least a hundred who are satisfied with a run to their more familiar haunts of Como. An outing for the Sunday has become as primary a necessity for the *bourgeois* of Turin, Milan and other cities as for the most irrepressible cockney. An excursion through many of the districts of Central and Northern Italy, after an absence of ten or twelve years, at once reveals the magnitude of the change that is everywhere being effected in the material well-being of the population. There is nothing more surprising than the progress made by agricultural industry in this country since the removal of native and foreign misrule. Notwithstanding several seasons of bad harvest, grape and silk disease, inundations, earthquakes and other calamities, I have the evidence both of my own senses and of most competent and disinterested persons in support of the assertion that the income from land never was so great in Lombardy, in Venetia, in Piedmont and the Emilia, as it has been since the wars of 1866 and 1870. The value of landed property, which had sunk considerably in consequence of the large amount of State domains and glebe lands thrown all at once upon the market (100,159 lots have been sold for 462,475,005 f., from October 1867, to May 1874), has lately risen to such an extent, that it has now become difficult, if not im-

possible, to realize more than 4 per cent. profit from any territorial investment. Land has changed hands with incredible rapidity. Where purchasers were not to be found among large proprietors and thriving farmers, wealthy merchants and traders from Genoa, from Leghorn and other places have stepped in, bidding high for large estates on mere speculation, in the certainty that territorial possession offered the safest, if not the most profitable, investment for their commercial and industrial earnings. The rich Emilian plains are being re-colonized by these Ligurian and Tuscan *nouveaux riches*, just as the estates of squires in Wales and of lairds in Scotland are coming into the hands of Liverpool brokers and Manchester cotton-spinners. The capital which was needed to promote cultivation on a large scale is rapidly circulating; and the removal of the ancient barriers between the various provinces of the kingdom (opening in Rome a market for Milanese butter, and enabling the Œnological Company at Asti in Piedmont to make wine from grapes imported from Puglia and Calabria), as well as the intercourse opened with foreign nations by the policy of free trade, are doing all that under circumstances is possible towards establishing a balance between the imports and exports of the kingdom. Thanks to the newly-awakened spirit of association, considerable extent of soil has been brought into cultivation by the drainage of northern marshes and the tillage of southern fallows. The swamps of the *Valli*

Ferraresi and the wilds of the *Tavoliere di Puglia* are made to yield abundant agricultural produce, promoting at the same time the health of the country and the wealth of the people, while the ill-famed but not ill-fated Cavour Canal, rescued from the hands of its original shareholders, adds to the fertility of some of the best districts in the Piedmontese and Lombard plain. In the north, as we all know, it is hardly as much on bread as on silk that the people live, and the whole of Lombardy revels this year on a perfect glut and surfeit of its beloved worms. A huge crop of this year's silk will be added to the store of last year, yet unsold. Prices must fall of course, but the Italians do not despair, for they trust that plenty will enable them to undersell their rivals of Japan and China, and if they cannot earn their livelihood by spinning, they will compete with the French as weavers. The woollen factories of Sella, at Biella, in Piedmont, and of Rossi, at Schio, in Venetia, lately illustrated by a clever essay of Signor Sella—a brother, I believe of Quintino Sella, the ex-Minister of Finance—are supplying home markets to a large amount, while the china, glass and other Tuscan and Venetian industries are winning favour with foreign purchasers, and holding their own at international exhibitions. The trade with Egypt, India and the Far East, to which the opening of the Suez Canal was to give so wide a scope, has not, as I said, hitherto realized the too sanguine anticipations of

Italian speculators; but Signor Rubattino, the head of a thriving steam navigation company in Genoa, writing in answer to the *Opinione* of Rome, has proved that there is nothing disheartening in these early results, and that the spirit of the hardy Genoese sailors, to whom the ill-fated Nino Bixio offered himself as a guide, is by no means damped by the failure of that brave man's venture.

In spite of the heat, and of the *far niente* for which some people make it a pretext, it is evident, in short, that a certain amount of work is going on in Italy from year's end to year's end, and that the spirit of industry and enterprise is waking up throughout the country. Politicians may blunder, financiers may be out in their reckoning, but labour is brisk, and the very literature of the country is assuming an almost exclusively utilitarian and speculative character. Italy is flooded with books and pamphlets on economical subjects; journals devoted to practical agricultural and commercial interests are springing up in all regional centres, and with them clubs and associations are busy with the spread of useful knowledge. A good deal of trash and twaddle is written no doubt, but withal we have evidence of respectable labour with a plausible purpose and a satisfactory result. With so many doctors to prescribe, the case of the Italian finance ought not to be desperate. Where so many are studying the means by which the meshes of the public purse may be tightened and

strengthened, the money to be put into it ought certainly to be forthcoming.

Wherever I have been, if I except a few of the "spectre cities" fallen from their high estate as former seats of Government, the evidence of the general well-being has surpassed my most sanguine anticipations. The principal towns are being rapidly rebuilt, repaved, lighted and cleaned, overstepping their old barriers and turning themselves inside out. And, as I already hinted, the best evidence of the people's well-being may be gathered from the indulgence of high and low not only in their old home amusements, in their attendance at theatres, in their participation in all State and Church festivities, but also from the eagerness with which they move about in quest of fashionable and pleasurable resorts. For a season the stir along the railway lines is nearly as great as in England. If the Italians work twice, they certainly seem determined to enjoy themselves four times as much as they ever did. The fourth page of every Italian newspaper is just now crowded with advertisements of bathing establishments, heralding their peculiar attractions, generally rather of a social than of a hygienic character—the old places straining every nerve to hold their own against new rivals whose names were scarcely known, or whose existence hardly suspected. For making the best of their prosperity, "making hay while the sun shines," the Italians will not certainly remain behind their neighbours.

Though not reckoned among watering-places, few rural districts are so gay at this season as these lovely northern lakes. The aspect of this dear Maggiore has been, within my recollection, thoroughly changed. From Arona to Meina, and Lesa and Belgirate, and all round the Bay of Baveno, from Stresa to Pallanza and Intra, the shore is dotted with habitations, with "grand hotels," with delightful villas, decked out in all the beauty of verdant gardens, many of them the abodes of enriched Genoese, some of them raised at the expense of millions of francs by German and English speculators,—railway contractors, builders, &c.—men, in some instances, who have made their fortunes in Italy, and who are bent on spending their treasures and their lives in the land which success has endeared to them.

Those who enter Italy by this great gate of the Simplon and who, issuing from the Val d' Ossola at Baveno, behold the smooth, compact and dustless road, the granite obelisks doing duty as telegraph-posts, the smooth lake, the bold mountains, the fairy Borromean Islets, the endless succession of flowery villas, the brisk traffic by land and water, the well-to-do population with hardly any beggars, must not only feel that they have come to the far-famed "Paradise of Europe," but must also be undeceived as to what they have heard or read about the misery and abjectness, the idleness and indolence, of the "poor devils" who inhabit it. *O, si sic omnia!*

CHAPTER X.

AN ITALIAN OBITUARY.

Italian Worship of the Dead—Rattazzi—His Career—Novara—Aspromonte—Mentana—His death—His Character—Gualterio—His Character—Wasting Life of Italian Public Men—Nino Bixio—His last Cruise—Bixio and Garibaldi—Mazzini.

THE eagerness with which the Italians honour the memory of their illustrious dead may be taken as an assurance that the race of great men will not soon become extinct among them. There is no country in the world where the worship of heroes recently departed is a more universal religion. Nowhere is the maxim "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*" more rigidly observed; and the other saying, "*On doit des égards aux vivants; on ne doit aux morts que la vérité*," is never applied on a recent grave. The sentiment, most honourable in itself, may be carried to affectation, as in the case of the excellent Cassinis, an ex-President of the Chamber of Deputies, about whom it was never publicly known that, in a fit of mental alienation, he died by his own hand—a calamity which, without in the least detracting from his reputation as a wise and strong-minded man, as he was throughout a long life, would only

have added to the interest his countrymen felt in his melancholy fate. Few dead people are benefited, and fewer still damaged, by a concealment of the truth. Bury it with their body and it will ooze out from the sod; disguise or garble it on the tombstone or in the newspaper, and it will be blazoned forth in the pages of history. Misguide public opinion, and it will not only find out your deceit, but revenge itself by exaggerating and perverting what you vainly endeavoured to gloss over and palliate.

These reflections were suggested to me as I read in the Roman journals the announcement of the death of Urbano Rattazzi, which occurred at Frosinone on the 7th of June. He was described, with some truth, as the man who, after Cavour, exercised the greatest influence over the destinies of old Piedmont, and over the rise and development of the new kingdom of Italy. But his panegyrists did not add that that influence, owing either to inferior abilities or to less propitious circumstances, never was turned by Rattazzi to the same good purposes, and never was attended with the same happy results as those attained by his prototype. Rattazzi was a Cavour *manqué*. He was a man of splendid disasters—the man of Novara, Aspromonte and Mentana. But there was something in the good star of Italy that always seemed, long after the event, to justify Rattazzi's blunders. All was well that ended well; and perhaps it might not be diffi-

cult to prove that without Novara there would never have been Solferino, or without Aspromonte and Mentana the storming of Porta Pia: for these blunders of Rattazzi were so many protests of Italy against the limits which Europe would have put on her aspirations. They were plain intimations that her revolution had not run its full cycle; that her destinies were still unfulfilled; and that she would give neither herself nor her neighbours any rest till her claims were admitted in full.

Like many other public men in his country, Urbano Rattazzi began life as a lawyer. Born in Alessandria in 1808, he was attracted to Turin on the first dawn of freedom in Piedmont in 1846-7, and his eloquence made some sensation at that "Agrarian Association" which, like every other union in Italy, from its very origin assumed the character of a political club. In the following year—the eventful 1848—when a Parliament was opened in Turin almost at the same time that the Piedmontese army was crossing the Ticino, and engaged in an unequal struggle with the Austrians, Rattazzi stood up as the champion of a "fusion" of Piedmont with Lombardy, and referred the terms of the compact by which the two provinces should be united to a "Constituent Assembly." He found himself in opposition to Cavour, who, with the Conservatives, would not allow the Constitution which had just been granted by Charles Albert to be put aside before it had come into operation. As a

Piedmontese nobleman also Cavour was too municipal and too practical not to object to a transaction which would have led to the absorption of his native State, and removed the capital to emulous and unfriendly Milan. But Rattazzi and his partisans carried the day, and the Alessandrian advocate obtained a portfolio in the Ministry which was formed under the Milanese Count Casafi, and went by the name of "Fusion Ministry." The dissensions between Lombards and Piedmontese, and the victories of Radetzky however soon broke upon these premature annexations, and there was for seven months in Turin—August, 1848, to March, 1849—a turmoil of passions, out of which Rattazzi emerged by echoing the popular cry of "Rescue" for Lombardy, and a "Democratic Government." At the head of this movement, and availing himself of Gioberti's popularity, he succeeded in overthrowing the Alfieri-Perrone Ministry, in setting up a Democratic Cabinet under Gioberti, and finally in tripping up Gioberti, and placing himself at the head of a Government pledged to an immediate declaration of hostilities. The issue of a three days' war was Novara, followed by the abdication, exile and death of Charles Albert.

By this disaster, which might have seemed final, Italy gained Victor Emmanuel and Massimo d' Azeglio. The uprightness of the new King's character, and the wisdom of the new Premier's counsels, saved Piedmont and her liberties out of

the national wreck. At an early time Cavour was admitted into the D'Azeglio Cabinet, which had the support of the Right Centre, or Liberal Conservatives, while at the head of the Opposition, but not of the Irreconcilables, was Rattazzi. Differences arose in the Cabinet between D'Azeglio and Cavour in 1852; and this latter determined to reign alone, and inclined to concessions which seemed to his colleague dangerous, broke up the Ministry, came to terms with Rattazzi, and effected a *Connubio* or coalition between the Right and Left Centres which enabled him to brood over his grand schemes during that long period of gestation by which, in 1859, the alliance between France and Piedmont was hatched, Novara avenged, and Lombardy annexed.

Magenta and Solferino however were followed by Villafranca; with the hope of liberating Italy "as far as the Adriatic," the Cavour Ministry fell, and Rattazzi, who knew how to recommend himself to the King by a pliancy which was not always consistent with dignity, held, for a few months under the Presidency of La Marmora, the guidance of a Government of which Cavour was still secretly the moving spirit, and at the head of which the great man re-appeared as soon as the consent of France to the annexation of Central and Southern Italy was more or less forcibly extorted. That much having been achieved, Cavour died in 1861, and a Ricasoli Administration ensued—that combination of "Alexander's Generals" after Alex-

ander's death which undertook to interpret and to pursue the master's policy. Rattazzi, though raised by the majority to the Presidency of the House of Deputies, favoured notwithstanding the views of the Opposition, and entered with them into schemes by which he engaged, in the event of his attaining power, to give secret aid to such attempts as Garibaldi might make either against Austria at Venice or against the Pope in Rome. Ricasoli fell, owing to some difference with the King which was never explained; and Rattazzi stepped into his place in the teeth of a strong hostile majority, and fettered by his engagements to the extreme revolutionary party. He however hushed up opposition, and eventually won over all parties by throwing out some hints about great events that were maturing in the south. It was by a secret understanding with the new Ministry that Garibaldi set out for his second expedition to Sicily, bent on electrifying those southern populations by the cry of "*Roma e Venezia!*" and enlisting them in a great effort to drive the Pope and his French Protectors from Rome. What Rattazzi and his accomplices contemplated by this manœuvre was a combination of a new Marsala and a new Castelfidardo in one enterprise. But in 1860 Cavour had secured the more or less open connivance of the French Emperor. In 1862 Rattazzi was acting at haphazard and upon his own undivided responsibility; and no sooner had France given unequivocal signs of

her displeasure, than the Italian Government found itself compelled not only to disavow Garibaldi, but to fight him—to shoot down and imprison him on the heights of the southernmost Apennine.

After Aspromonte Rattazzi fell, and a Peruzzi-Minghetti Cabinet ensued, which negotiated the September Convention with the Emperor Napoleon, and by establishing the capital at Florence seemed to have renounced all claims upon Rome. Two years later, 1866, the Austro-Prussian war broke out, in which Italy, by the strong co-operation of all parties, though beaten by land and sea, won Venetia. La Marmora, who had all the merit of the Prussian alliance, had lost reputation both as a strategist and a diplomatist. He fell before the outcry of the Left, and Rattazzi, once more bound to this party by rash promises, attained the supreme powers. He had again secretly engaged to allow and abet a new Garibaldian onset upon Rome. Volunteers stood up at the call of the Red-shirted hero on all sides. The Government went through the ignoble farce of a mock arrest and transportation of Garibaldi, but favoured his escape, supplied him with men and money, and were even preparing to back him with the royal troops, when Napoleon "put down his foot," took the defence of the Pope upon himself, and gave Italy to understand that one step towards Rome would be the open declaration of war against France. Italy had to "back out"; and thus the Garibaldian expedition

and the Rattazzi Ministry collapsed at the same time.

Any return to power after Mentana might have seemed an impossibility for any other man; but Rattazzi had survived many disasters, and the occupation of Rome in 1870 had reconciled the Italians to the humiliation they had to endure in 1867. They were now in Rome, and it was difficult to say how far the sympathies of Europe with their yearnings for their capital might have been enlisted by that desperate Garibaldian *camisade* for which Rattazzi was responsible. Rattazzi was, after all, only chargeable with sublime daring, and with that duplicity which had, in other instances, been of no little avail to Macchiavello's countrymen. Rattazzi was a "Florentine secretary" in 18mo. But he had, at least, some initiative in him; and the statesmen who followed him, who actually found their way to Rome, had carried circumspection and procrastination to an excess little in accordance with the turbulent impatience of their most sanguine countrymen. The Lanza administration had now been in power five years: it had met many mishaps, and committed many blunders. The turn had come for the Opposition to rise into office, and Rattazzi was at its head. He had won over to his person many of those Southern Deputies who, since the removal of the capital to Rome, preponderate by sheer numbers in the Chamber, and with whom he ingratiated himself by the amenity and ver-

satility of his intelligence, his winning manners and a certain amiable laxity and freedom from political and other scruples. The Lanza Ministry, disheartened by the ill success of their Convent Bill, driven to bay by an almost insurmountable financial embarrassment, and beset by other manifold difficulties, were already crying for quarter, and announcing their determination to throw up their portfolios before the end of the Session. Another Cabinet belonging to the Right was nowhere forthcoming, and it seemed that nothing could any longer prevent the formation of a Government of the Left, with Rattazzi as its only ostensible head, when the decline of all his physical and mental faculties, of which his friends had been for some time sorrowfully watching the symptoms, proved to have its source in an organic complaint, the sudden ravages of which cut him off at the age, for a politician, by no means advanced of sixty-five.

> "To-morrow would have given him power
> To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
> And must it rest upon his grave?"

The abilities of Rattazzi were not of the very highest order. Again and again, upon the outbreak of hostilities, he was trusted with full dictatorial powers, and the *farrago* of administrative laws with which he, on such occasions, flooded the country, did not seem excusable even on the score of the necessity which dictated them, or of the

hurry in which they were prepared. Unlike most Italian Ministers, Rattazzi was at no time a hard-working man, though the extreme quickness and brightness of his intellect enabled him to arrive almost intuitively at results which a duller man would not have attained by hours and days of plodding labour. In the Chamber he showed himself a fluent, polished and elegant orator—most efficient when in opposition. As a debater he had little power of initiative, because he was never remarkable for deep conviction or consistent principles, and he habitually coquetted with those with whom he least agreed; but he was uncommonly skilful in fence and smart at repartee—a very lawyer in quibbles—and he frequently managed to give the argument a personal turn, and stand as it were on his defence, when his appeal to the House upon the subject of any real or fancied grievance of his own was so earnest and beseeching as momentarily at least to enlist all sympathies in his cause. There was something extremely soft and even feminine in his finely-chiselled features and in the silvery tone of his voice; and, in some instances he was known not to shrink from petty stage tricks, resorting to the peculiarly feminine arguments of tears and even fainting fits.

But that same gentleness of disposition, the geniality of his conversation, and his invariable and inexhaustible good nature, made up for many failings, and while they insured him the devotion

of not a few friends, won him the good-will of most adversaries. Personal foes he had none. With the asperities of Victor Emmanuel's strong, wilful and somewhat rough temper the smooth sinuosities of Rattazzi's plastic nature most happily dove-tailed, while between the King and the stern, dry and unbending Ricasoli, it was clearly the case of "*Duro con duro non fa buon muro.*" Rattazzi was in favour with his sovereign to his dying day, though it is not quite sure that the King's *engoûment* for his Minister was wholly grounded on esteem, and that it was not partly due to flatteries and complacencies somewhat derogatory to the character of a self-respecting statesman. The same easy success that his popularity insured him at home attended Rattazzi abroad, especially in Paris, where, after his marriage with a Princess of the Bonaparte family—Madame de Solms, *née* Bonaparte Wise—he often resided for whole seasons, when released from his cares of office, and where he made his way into distinguished circles. He was perhaps led by the flattering reception he met with there into those misconceptions of the disposition of the French Emperor's mind, upon which he based his slippery policy, and ventured into the *coups de tête* which, as we have seen, twice caused his downfall and disgrace.

A man of very different character, and indeed intended as it would seem for a perfect contrast to Rattazzi, was conveyed to his last repose during my

stay in Rome. This was the Marchese Filippo Antonio Gualterio. He was born in Orvieto, and was therefore a subject of the Pope—the one amongst the sovereigns of Italy to whom, on account of his claims to a twofold supremacy, men of lofty mind and generous character naturally felt a double reluctance to own allegiance. Driven into exile at an early age from the ancient city which gave him birth, Gualterio was led by his Etruscan instincts to settle at Florence, the only place in Italy where, between 1831 and 1848, it was at all possible for a man aspiring to think for himself to live unmolested. On the first national outbreak of 1848, Gualterio rose from the genial leisure of his literary pursuits, and was seen among the volunteers who from every part of the Peninsula rushed to the fields of Lombardy, eager to join the ranks of the Piedmontese army. In spite of the repeated disasters of that army, Gualterio was clear-sighted enough to perceive that the future of Italy was for ever associated with that of Piedmont, and he bound himself to the Princes of the Savoy Dynasty, and especially to the person of the "King Honestman," by ties of friendship exceeding even the proverbial devotion of the King's most loyal native subjects. In 1859, after Solferino, Gualterio revisited Tuscany, where by his former intimacy with Ricasoli, Peruzzi and other leaders of public opinion he possessed considerable influence, and powerfully contributed to that popular movement which ended in the over-

throw of the Grand-Ducal Government, and to the annexation of Central Italy to the Northern Kingdom. Then ensued the great catastrophe of the Two Sicilies, and the invasion of the Papal provinces of the Marches and Umbria, and Gualterio, who was already a Senator, was sent out as a Royal Commissioner, and later as a Prefect, to newly-emancipated Perugia; and soon, in the confusion arising from the backward movement of the Pope's army under Lamoricière, he had the good fortune to wrest from their hands his birthplace, Orvieto, which in the calculation of the Emperor Napoleon was intended to continue under Papal rule. In the same capacity as Prefect, Gualterio afterwards administered Genoa, and then Naples; and from this latter place he was recalled after Mentana, when he was asked by General Menabrea to take the portfolio of the Interior in that Cabinet on which fell the inheritance of Rattazzi's mistakes and misdeeds. Gualterio however was too earnest a patriot to have in him the stuff of a militant politician, and he willingly consented to the wishes of the King who tendered to him the neutral position of "Minister of the Royal Household." As the King's Majordomo Gualterio greatly added to the esteem and confidence he had always enjoyed at Court, and was chiefly instrumental in that matrimonial arrangement by which the heir of the throne, Prince Humbert, was united to his cousin, the Princess Marguerite, "the star of Italy." In another scheme

on which the King had set his heart—that of the promotion of his second son, Prince Amadeus, to the throne of Spain—Gualterio was found among the supporters of the royal views, his strong personal attachment to his sovereign, it is to be hoped, prevailing in this instance over his better judgment. The King himself, Gualterio and Generals Menabrea and Cialdini, for more than two years stood alone in this matter against the opinion of the whole of Italy and of Prince Amadeus himself; and the project would have come to nothing had not the Franco-German war and the conquest of Rome diverted public attention from a subject which was, after all, rather of a domestic than of a dynastic interest.

Upon the removal of the Court from Florence to Rome, the Minister of the Royal Household, exposed to petty back-stairs' intrigues and jealousies, found his position at the Quirinal untenable, and, resigning his office, he retired from public life. It would be difficult to say to what extent the sense of his disgrace—if the word can apply to a retirement in which he received every imaginable mark of favour from the King and the Princess—preyed upon Gualterio's mind; but there certainly seemed to have been something like wounded pride and disappointment conspiring with overwork to bring on a fit of melancholy, under which his faculties gave way, and which led to his confinement in a private asylum near Pistoia. He was restored to the world, though

not to perfect health, two years before his death, and was to be seen moving about with a vacant look, and not unattended, in the streets of Rome and Florence, a sad wreck of what had been a noble intellect and a great heart.

Gualterio was of old and high aristocratic descent —of northern blood originally, the traces of which were still discernible in his lofty stature, deep-blue eyes, and rich brown hair, worn long in youth. There could be nothing more gentlemanly than his countenance, air and manner, in spite of a peculiar negligence and even slovenliness in dress, contracted in his early literary days, and not quite cured by the exigencies of his courtly duties. He was a man of earnest faith, a somewhat solitary spirit, cast in ancient mould, firm in his purposes, indifferent to praise or blame, only accessible to those disinterested affections through which his heart could be most easily reached, and any slight of which, real or imaginary, would rankle deeply and poison existence. During the last four days of his life he refused all nourishment.

The cognizance of the House of Gualterio is a demi-couchant lion, with the motto, "*Non omnis jaceo.*" His memory will not certainly be suffered by his countrymen to lie in his grave. Besides 'Gli Ultimi Rivolgimenti d' Italia' (a History of 1848-9) and other works, which insure him a distinguished rank among the writers of his age, he leaves behind him the example of a patriotic devo-

tion and of a consistent self-denial, which will not soon be lost upon the rising generation. Gualterio lavished his private fortune in the public service, and bequeathed nothing to his sons but an education which fitted them to be of use in a public capacity. One of them, a young officer, bore arms at Custozza; the other, a midshipman, was fished up half starved out of the wreck of the Re d' Italia at Lissa, after floating for eleven hours.

In another respect, besides this generous abnegation—a badge of honour to which ninety-nine out of a hundred political characters in his country are entitled—Gualterio came in for his share of what seems to be a common lot with many of them. He died comparatively young (in his fifty-fifth year), and afflicted by at least partial mental alienation. Instances of longevity and even of robust and flourishing old age are not rare in Italy, for the climate is not unpropitious to those who use it well and live at ease; but the duties of public life, the turmoils of political agitation, came somewhat suddenly on the inexperienced Italians; they betook themselves to the task of emancipating and regenerating their country with a zeal which in many instances exceeded their powers, and submitted to toils to which their frames had not been inured by early habits. The example of Cavour, Sella and other hard-headed Piedmontese enforced equally strenuous exertions on all men aspiring to high places, either in the Cabinet or at the head of the

various administrative departments. In Italy a high public functionary is expected to do not only his own work, but also that of his too often incapable and almost always unwilling subordinates. A Minister is generally a fag on whom rests all the drudgery as well as the responsibility of his office. Hence he is at his desk night and day, and allows himself no respite till he is either providentially removed by an adverse vote of the Chamber and a Cabinet crisis, or his health, physical or mental, breaks down. This lack of good material strength is of course attended by a corresponding absence of stout moral endurance. Italian statesmen are too new to their business to stand the wear and tear inseparable from political warfare. They take rebuke and defeat too much to heart; they put too much feeling and passion in those vicissitudes of party strife which in other countries are treated as a mere game of give and take. There is very little distinction, and positively none but the most paltry emolument, attached to the highest places in the kingdom—nothing to tempt ambition or to allure covetousness; but, for that very reason, much to engage honourable aspiration. Politics in Italy are a kind of chivalry. There is nothing about which men evince a more eager and almost morbid anxiety than to engage in and withdraw from public life with the same unsullied and unchallenged honour. This thin-skinned tenderness may prove to be of inestimable value in the formation of

the national character; but it is apt to work not a little individual misery. It has darkened the closing days of Farini, Cassinis and scores of others besides Gualterio, dooming some of them to the solitude of a mad-house, and driving others to self-destruction; it has brought men still in their prime of life—like Cavour, Fanti, Della Rovere, Cugia and Govone—to their graves; it has caused Cialdini to retire in the sulks, and tempted La Marmora to rush into print, to the great disparagement both of his own and his country's name. It is a fault on the right side however—a weakness springing from honourable sources and tending to good results. Where failure inflicts such poignant misery, men will learn to shrink from no efforts to insure success.

One of the men who were thus prematurely "used up," in obedience to a noble instinct of patriotic self-sacrifice, was the "Ajax of Garibaldi's staff," Nino Bixio. A telegraphic despatch announcing his death was flashed from the Hague on the 20th of December, 1873, creating the most painful sensation throughout Italy. A native of Genoa, Bixio, like Garibaldi, began his career as a sailor in the mercantile service. With Garibaldi however he flew to arms on the first outbreak in 1848, and at Rome during the siege gave proofs of an intrepidity amounting almost to madness. After the downfall of the ephemeral Roman Republic, Bixio went back to his seafaring life, and only

came back ten years later, when he commanded a battalion of *Cacciatori delle Alpi*, under Garibaldi, in the vanguard of the conquerors of Solferino. In the following year he was second in command of the expedition of "the Thousand" to Marsala. In that, as in former campaigns, he was present at every action; and there was scarcely any from which he returned without an arm asling, or the head swathed in crimson bandages. At the close of the wars he was made General of Division, and was elected by his native town a Member of the House of Deputies. As an orator in the Chamber, though he sat on the Left, Bixio exhibited great moderation, and hardly any man ever spoke to better purpose. His frank, soldier-like, racy and trenchant manner, aided by a certain uncouth, but impressive fluency, and a great deal of good common-sense on most subjects, at all times commanded the respect of the Chamber, and riveted its attention. On some points however, especially of foreign policy, he was an *enfant terrible*. Italy was still almost hopeless of gaining Rome and Venice, when Bixio talked about re-asserting the claims of his country to Nice and Corsica, the Canton Ticino, Trent, Trieste, and even Malta. His sallies in that direction, however, invariably met with a murmur of disapprobation from every side of the Chamber.

Grievously disappointed after 1866 and 1870, though he stood his ground with his wonted valour at Custozza, and had a hand in the taking of Civita

Vecchia and Rome, Bixio learnt probably that it was not by deeds of arms that Italy could aspire to greatness. Honours and rank were not what his noble heart coveted—it was only incessant work that could satisfactorily fill up his existence. Soon after the annexation of Rome he resigned his command, and asked for unlimited leave of absence from the Senate, of which he had been a Member since 1866, and from military duties, and again took to the sea as to his native element. The Suez Canal had in his own estimation, and in that of many of his countrymen, opened for Italian sailors that boundless field of maritime and commercial enterprise of which the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope had robbed them in the sixteenth century. The expectations of Italy in that respect were perhaps over-sanguine. Owing to a combination of vicissitudes almost miraculous, the world had come back to conditions almost analogous to those of the Roman Empire in its most glorious period, and it was supposed that Italy would become the highway to the East; Brindisi would occupy in the Mediterranean that position which ancient Brundusium had attained in the days of the Cæsars, and the Italian flag would distance those of other nations in their race to the Indian Ocean. Events did not at first to any great extent realize these golden anticipations; and Bixio, aware of the ascendency his energy could always exercise on his fellow-townsmen and fellow-craftsmen, de-

termined to put himself at the head of a vast trading enterprise, and had a merchant vessel built and chartered in England, of which he took the command, purposing to show the way into those distant seas where the Italian tricolor had as yet been scarcely ever seen. Bixio's friends residing in London cannot have forgotten how sanguine were the hopes in the success of his undertaking expressed by the gallant sailor, in a speech delivered at a banquet given by his countrymen in his honour. Poor Bixio's career in the Eastern seas was however of no long duration. Much time lapsed before his ship was ready for sea, and something like disappointment awaited him as to the means by which his enterprise was to be furthered at the outset. He sailed at last, and was heard of as cruising in the Japan and China seas, apparently with no well-defined object, and as yet with indifferent success. More recently it was reported that he had offered his services to the Dutch in their contest with the Atchinese of Sumatra: it was not known in what capacity; but probably he merely placed his vessel at their orders as a transport. The tidings of his decease came from the Hague; but nothing was clearly said as to the spot or the manner in which he met his fate, or as to the final disposal of his dead body. He came to some obscure, untimely La Perouse-like end, and all is said.

Notwithstanding his impetuosity and heat of

temper, there was something in the true and loyal character of Bixio that entitled him to every man's affection, and caused his death to be lamented as a great national calamity. Although he did not join Garibaldi in his hair-brained expeditions to Aspromonte and Mentana, or in his still more crazy campaign on behalf of the French Republic of 1870, Bixio enjoyed to the last the esteem and friendship of the Hero of Caprera, who looked upon him as "*le brave des braves.*" Garibaldi avowed that his lieutenant could boast as much valour as himself, while he possessed besides, if he had been allowed to use them, sense and discretion for both. Bixio died in his fifty-second year.

Not long before Bixio there died at Pisa a countryman and townsman of his, of whom it may be said that far from being swept away by too early a death; he lived perhaps too long for the welfare of Italy and for his own reputation—Giuseppe Mazzini. Mazzini, broken in health and spirits, had been for many months residing at Lugano, in the Canton Ticino, prostrated by an illness from which he could not be expected to recover. It seems that, in the apprehension of his approaching end, he resolved upon one more attempt, however desperate, by which he might prove his perseverance to the last in his self-appointed mission. He thus died as he had lived—a conspirator to his closing day; conspiring now against Italy as for so many years he had conspired for Italy. More than forty years

before, Mazzini's earliest essays in the Florence Antologia were hailed as the development of a new intellectual life in Italy. His depth of thought, his earnest, impassioned manner, his emphatic and almost mystical language, and his warm, expansive sympathy with all that was great and good, took the hearts of his young contemporaries by storm, and made him one of the leading lights of his age before even his name was known to his readers. Had his lot fallen in quiet times, and had he limited his aspirations to such influence as the pen alone could exercise, he might have left a conspicuous mark on his age and country, and his name would be pronounced with unmixed reverence and affection. But he deemed himself a man of action, and set up as a leader and ruler of his fellow-men, though he was a solitary being, knowing little of the world about him, and incapable of looking out of himself.

Mazzini grew up with a generation of Italians whom the revival of a "Kingdom of Italy" under the First Napoleon had taught to dream of a resurrection of their country. He has been credited with originating the idea of a United Italy, though his only merit, perhaps, consisted in his firm faith that the "dream" could eventually be realized. The idea is as old as Dante, Macchiavello and Alfieri, and Mazzini was still almost in his infancy when men as high-minded as himself died for it. Nor was he a man above expedients, nor an uncom-

promising Republican throughout. His first address was "To Charles Albert of Savoy"; his first schemes were to gather all Italy under the sceptre of a Constitutional king. Charles Albert was as true-hearted a patriot as Mazzini himself, but he had, at his accession, the Austrian's foot on his neck; and Louis Philippe sent him word that "he had trouble enough with his own Constitution in Paris without making himself the champion of a Constitution in Turin." Charles Albert, in Mazzini's estimation, "lacked faith," as well he might, considering that his alternative lay "between the dagger of the Carbonari and the chocolate of the Jesuits." Charles Albert lacked faith in 1831; so did Pius IX. in 1847, when Mazzini appealed to him to be a believer. "*Siate credente, Santo Padre!*" Mazzini alone had faith, and he was sure he could move mountains; but they were mountains in labour, and the world knows what came of them. For above thirty years Mazzini strove to "make" Italy. He bade his countrymen put no faith in princes. He wrote on his banner, "God and the people." He proclaimed a Republic, an Italian Republic, a Universal Republic—a Young Italy with a whole sisterhood of young nations. Politics were with him of less moment than social questions; moral problems of less consequence than the religion he had discovered for himself, and kept to himself. Country and humanity were with him blended in one indivisible idea. Of that idea he alone sounded the depth. He

was its High Priest; he wrestled hard with himself to give it utterance both in learned and popular writings, but it has remained a riddle, if not to all, at least to the vast generality of mankind. Of one thing alone he was sure—that he could be no man's fellow-worker either in thought or action. Men might learn from him, serve under him, sacrifice themselves for him, but they could have nothing in common with him.

With such a cast of mind, and with warm generous impulses—for the conceit was of the head, not of the heart—it can be easily understood that there was nothing Mazzini would not attempt, nothing that he could achieve. He had "the peoples" with him. What forces could France, or Austria, or the whole world muster against him? The world well knows the result of his campaigns —his attack on Savoy, the Bandiera tragedy at Naples, that of Pisacane in Sicily, the riots at Milan, the wanton bloodshed at Genoa, the hundred plots baffled by as many treasons, the many ventures to which Mazzini committed all who believed in him.

Yet how many were they who to the very last believed in Mazzini? His faith forty years ago was in "Young Italy." He had taught his disciples to look with contempt upon every man above thirty or forty years of age; and forty years passed, and Young Italy with grey hair, Young Italy on the wrong side of sixty, still exercised as

irresistible a fascination on inexperienced youth as when he first shone among his exiled countrymen at Marseilles, and his pale, ascetic, but transcendently bright countenance, his inspired language, his loving address, made his enthusiasm irresistibly catching. But no other man who won so many admirers as Mazzini, ever secured so few friends. If we except two or three devoted and very single-minded Englishmen, there is hardly a human being whom long familiarity had not estranged from Mazzini. With manners consummately affable and courteous he combined an overweening conceit and a narrowness and bigotry of views which could hardly put up with independent minds. He was a lonely genius, all apart from the ways of other men, spurning the suggestions of the plainest common-sense, professing to do all for his fellow-beings, yet nothing with them, or by their aid. Of the different ranks of society he from the first proscribed the highest. Then he quarrelled with the middle classes. The lowest alone, the very dregs, were Mazzini's own people—they alone uncorrupt, incorruptible. Later in life however faith even in them died away in the heart of the arch-democrat, and with candid contempt he repudiated the crime-stained Paris Commune. He then gave up the hope of being a prophet in his own age; his only trust was in a coming generation, where the germ of his "idea" could alone attain full development.

Mazzini was disappointed in his own Italy—the Italy of the present day—an Italy to which indeed he had given a mighty impulse, but which was "made" without him, and as it were in spite of him. He was never very warm in his praise of his living friends, and apt to denounce as adversaries all who were so unfortunate as to differ from him. He was sure that "Charles Albert had betrayed Italy, and Victor Emmanuel would also end by betraying her." Upon the strength of these ungenerous convictions he had undermined the ground in the rear of the Piedmontese army in Lombardy in 1848, and continued as implacable to the "Subalpines" as the Pope himself. And even after the formation of the Italian kingdom, he insisted that Italy had been freed by "betraying" Venice, and Venice emancipated by "betraying" Rome. But Venice and Rome were also annexed, and then the only grievance was that all had been won by "betraying" the Republic. Freely admitted to his country, elected to the House of Deputies, he chose an exile's lot, pleading his Republican faith, regardless of the wounds his declarations inflicted upon Saffi, Fabrizi and a hundred of his former Republican associates, honourable but practical men, who looked upon Republicanism as a means, not an end, and who, without repudiating their opinions, did not deem themselves entitled to conspire against the form of Government their country had chosen for itself. Even with Garibaldi

Mazzini seemed determined not to die at peace; and the latest controversy between these two champions of democracy and their partisans, by revealing the impracticability of their different political theories, contributed to rally the people round the King's throne more efficiently than any wise or liberal measure of the Government itself could have done.

Well, it has been said that few are the men "happy in the opportunity of death"; fewer still who know when they have reached the zenith of their orbit, and when it becomes them to withdraw from the world. How much better would it have been for Mazzini and his country, if when Italy had been providentially rid of the Austrians and the French—if not long before—he had come back to his books and his lady friends in London, and desisted from those insurrectionary attempts which were sometimes tragical, sometimes ridiculous, when made against Austria or France, but which became simply criminal when directed against Italy!

CHAPTER XI.

VENETIA.

Verona—Austrian and Italian Verona—Decline—Revival—The Arena—The Veronese Clergy—The Battle of Lepanto—Local Self-Government—The Mantua-Modena Railway—Old and New Verona—Venetian Prospects—North and South Tyrol—Austrian and Italian Tyrol—Italian and German Mountains.

I WONDER if there be any thing to be written about this romantic old city of Verona besides what one learns from Shakespeare. English travellers are somewhat apt to go through Italy as if it were only a country, hardly caring to inquire whether it is inhabited by a people. Murray is nothing if not æsthetic or economical. He tells a traveller a great deal about stone and canvas, but little of anything concerning flesh and blood. He teaches us how to defend our purses, but hardly how to improve our heads. We learn what to think of the Arena, or how to find our way to Juliet's alleged tomb. He is eloquent about old Italy, but the new country, the regenerated nation, are a blank to him, and will remain so to the end of time, for an immense majority of English travellers. I have only been here twenty hours, but I have looked about me

for other matters besides what one reads of in stereotyped guide books, and I flatter myself I have learnt a thing or two about Verona—enough perhaps to understand by what stages old Italy is merging into new Italy.

No one of us has forgotten how this town, with all the region of Venetia to which it belongs, was ceded by Austria to Italy at the close of the war of Sadowa eight years ago. Verona was the strongest citadel, the greatest military arsenal of Austria south of the Alps. A whole army was its garrison, and there was a moment when Radetzky, dissatisfied with the mutinous spirit of Milan and Venice after 1848, contemplated a removal of the whole administration both civil and military to the city of the Adige, which would thus have become the capital of the Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom. Verona and its *Marca* or frontier province, have at all times been the head-quarters of Germanism. It was chosen as a capital by Theodoric, the first King of the Ostrogoths in Italy; and Otho I., the first German Emperor, whom the priests called to rule over Italy, being aware of the importance of the valley of the Adige as the great German gate into the Peninsula, and, as anxious to secure it in German hands as the old French kings were of keeping a hold over Saluzzo or Pinerolo, spared no efforts to convert it into a great Teutonic dependency. In the wars of the Lombard League against the first and second Frederic of Swabia, Verona was Ghibelline to the

backbone, the last to revolt against the empire, the first to return to its allegiance. It spurned the French and their sham liberty, when, violating the neutrality of the Venetian Republic, Bonaparte and his Sans-culottes made it a pretext for wanton, infamous depredations, the traces of which are still perceptible on the main altars of Verona churches, to which some of the plundered pictures have only been restored in a mutilated state, and some not restored at all. Finally, when Italian nationality attempted to storm the bulwarks of Austrian domination in 1848, the tide of patriotic advance always broke before Verona, not only because Austrian strongholds were proof against all Italian onsets, but also because the insurrection met with little or no sympathy on the part of the rural population—that be-lorded and be-priested peasantry which distinguished itself in the 'Pasque Veronesi,' a parody of the Sicilian Vespers in 1797.

But Austria fell, and with the rest Verona also became Italian, received a garrison and a Prefect at the hands of King Victor Emmanuel's Government, and saw the three Italian colours hoisted on those bastions on which had so long flaunted the black and yellow. The first result of the change was dead loss to the Veronese; for a great military establishment exercises on the population that surrounds it the same corrupting influence wrought by a great monastic institution. It breeds and fosters idleness and profligacy of the worst description. Verona lived by

its Austrian garrison, and its only business was to minister to the wants and vices of its aristocratic staff of officers. The Austrians felt more at home in Verona than in any other Lombard or Venetian city; they indulged and pampered the lower classes, encouraged the beggars, patronized priests and monks, and made of their military shows, of their music and of the scraps of their feasts the daily bread of the populace.

The Austrians went away and the Italians took their place; a small division of the Italian army—a democratized army with officers generally living on their paltry pay—a Prefect with a meagre salary, thin staff of officials, like Goldsmith's parson, literally "passing rich with forty pounds a year." It became evident to the Veronese that they could no longer live by their rulers' bounty, but simply by their own wits, or by the sweat of their brow, and they would have been more than men if they had liked it at first. The Prefect, Allievi, a Milanese, an estimable man who has been in office here during the whole period since the occupation, has proved himself the right man in the right place, and by an adroit, conciliatory management of the Provincial Council and of the Municipal Corporation, he has found the means of tiding over a period of transition, which, under any other rule, might have been fatal to the needy population. He found among the aristocratic and priestly set noble-hearted men who cared for country more than for party;

who were Veronese before they were Ghibellines, or *Austriacanti;* whose local patriotism and charity were stronger than either their Austrian predilections, or Italian antipathies. On the neutral ground of local beneficence and improvement the Prefect met the most stubborn Conservatives, and established with them a harmony and good-will, which all turned to the profit of the city and province, which have continued for several years undisturbed by any untoward occurrence.

The Austrians and the priests had suffered some of the most splendid churches, and especially that of St. Zeno, to go to decay. The Municipality took these churches in hand, not merely as places of worship, for there really are too many of them at Verona, but as glorious monuments of art; and a work of restoration is now going on with equally praiseworthy zeal in the interests of religion and civilization. Old frescoes and bas-reliefs, which had been daubed or plastered over, are brought to light; old crypts are unearthed; old Italy is everywhere laid bare, propped up, rescued, saved. You see the same reverence for what is doubly sacred everywhere exhibited by that Italian Government which the Pope stigmatizes as both Godless and Vandalic. St. Mark's, in Venice, is being repaired, and St. Paul's, outside Rome, completed, not at the expense of his Holiness and his Peter's pence, but at the cost of the State. The famous Arena here in Verona is undergoing a complete process of re-edifi-

cation, to protect it from the rain water which was everywhere rotting stone and cement, preparatory to the great measure which is to convert it from a Punch-and-Judy show, and a row of dingy shops, into the great monument its original builders and the reverence of after ages fitted it for.

The love of the Veronese for their ancient amphitheatre exceeds all bounds. They must not only possess and admire it, but enjoy it, and even such a man as the poet Aleardo Aleardi has been heard to declare that "the Arena would no longer be the Arena to him, if he could not go to it through the mean wooden sheds which disfigure its area, and listen to the strolling players who there perform their grotesque drolleries and buffooneries." But the Prefect and many of the well-thinking Veronese feel how correctly Lessing's taunt applies to Verona —that taunt which describes Italy as the lion's carcase and the modern Italians as the worms and maggots born of its corruption, and by right of their birth claiming kindred with the royal beast among whose remains they have their home—and it is to be hoped that the vulgarization of the Arena may come to an end.

The first thought of the new rulers of Verona was to give the people bread and work; the second was to supply them with food for the mind. Instruction is the order of the day in Italy, and as great care was here taken to avoid all collision between the lay and clerical authorities, the

schools have everywhere been opened under their joint patronage. The Bishop of Verona, Monsignor Canossa, is a scion of one of the most aristocratic houses of the place, and is no friend to new-fangled liberalism; but he goes any lengths hand-in-hand with the Prefect in the interests of popular education, and his clergy are so far advanced that one of them, the Arciprete Giovanni Battista Chiarelli, the incumbent of the beautiful old gothic church of St. Anastasia, close to the door of the hotel from which I am writing, is this very day celebrating the tercentenary of the Battle of Lepanto (fought on the 7th of October, 1581), that naval engagement of which the Spaniards monopolize the glory, though their Italian subjects and allies far out-numbered their own combatants. The good priest invited the faithful to a solemnity described by him as "both religious and patriotic," intended to illustrate the very last enterprise in which all Italy as a nation joined her forces against the Turk, and in which all her States—Venice, Genoa, Tuscany, Rome, the Two Sicilies, and even Parma and Lucca—bore their part. To the best of my knowledge this is the first time during the two-and-twenty years in which Piedmont and Italy have been struggling for emancipation, in which a Catholic clergyman has dared to join the words "Love of God and love of country" in the same inscription over the door of a church; the first instance of an Italian victory being claimed by the

Church as a subject of common pride with the nation. The brave Chiarelli has taken good care to enlighten his flock about the particulars of the great event which he proposed to illustrate, by the publication and free distribution of an excellent historical essay on the great naval exploit, dwelling on the horrors inflicted upon Italy and the Mediterranean coasts by the Ottoman inroads, and the dangers incurred by all Christendom—dangers which all the power of Austria and Spain seemed unable to avert—to which the perfidious policy of France added gravity and significance, and which that Italian maritime crusade was chiefly instrumental in averting.

But the most pleasing feature in all this evidence of material and moral progress lies in the fact that it is not the work of a ruler, but of the people themselves. The Italian Government has fallen into such helpless administrative disorder, that their subordinates in the provinces, despairing in many cases of obtaining sufficiently prompt answers to their most urgent applications, have ceased in a great measure to address the Home Office any questions. The Home Minister appoints a Prefect; this latter, or the Deputy representing the locality in the Chamber, submits the nomination of the Mayors for a Ministerial approbation, which is invariably granted; and, for the rest, towns and provinces are allowed the blessings of an almost unconditional self-government. Deprived of valid

support from the Central Administration, and denied almost all communication with it, the Prefect must needs lean on the Provincial Council over which he presides. His dealings with it are those of a Sovereign with his Parliament, and over the Municipalities away from his own residence he only exercises such influence as persuasion rather than real authority can ensure. Italian political institutions are modelled on those of the French; yet such are the tendencies and traditions of this old Latin people, that, while in France everything aims at the consolidation of the Central Power, in Italy everything leads to the development of local self-government; and this instinct acts with the greatest strength in those communities in which the seeds of the old liberties of the Mediæval Free Cities had attained the greatest development, as in Milan, Venice, Bologna, Florence, &c., while in Rome and Naples, where despotism at an early time stifled all popular life, municipal institutions have hitherto made little headway, and self-rule only too frequently degenerates into misrule. Here in Verona the Prefect, Allievi, strikes me as the personification of a *Podestà* of the Middle Ages—he alone a stranger, appointed or chosen as such, in order to ensure his neutrality among native parties, acting simply as moderator and arbiter in great disputes, and for the rest allowing, and indeed inviting, the participation of all good citizens in the promotion of the public good.

As a proof of the strength developed by the principle of self-government in these parts, I have only to mention the construction of the railway between Mantua and Modena—a work of the utmost international importance for Italy, Austria and Germany, giving full scope to the line of the Brenner, and which was undertaken not by the State and not by a company, but by a partnership, or *consorzio*, of the three provinces of Verona, Mantua and Modena. By this railway a direct communication has been opened from Trent and Verona to Bologna and Brindisi, avoiding the long detour by Vicenza, Padua and Ferrara, a roundabout route which had also the inconvenience of bringing the line of the Brenner into competition with that of the Sömmering.

There are indeed signs of life given by New Italy even in this very region, which was till so lately the stronghold of Old Italy. But much as all a stranger sees here may delight him, and cause him to wonder that such great results should have been obtained in so short a time, it would be impossible to overlook the difference the city of Theodoric presents if contrasted with other towns a little more to the west, on which the new era has dawned at an earlier period, such as Brescia and Bergamo, Milan and Turin. In the opinion of foreign visitors, Turin has never been really Italian. Milan has ceased to be Italian since the French occupation at the end of the last century. To be Italian, in the opinion of these strangers, is for a town to be quaint and

picturesque, but also to be filthy and noisome, and to swarm with priests, monks and beggars. In these respects, no doubt, Verona has still not a little of the old-world charm clinging about her. The beggars are not few, and are very importunate, and they are evidently of that class which springs less from the wants than from the demoralization of a people; crippled old women, for whom the community should, and I really believe, does provide, but who prefer the open air and their vagrant habits to the discipline of an asylum, or mere noisy urchins to whom begging is rather an amusement than an employment—old women and urchins who always change their whine into a derisive shout, or a string of curses when they perceive that their importunity makes no impression. The man who takes pity on one of these wretches brings a hundred upon himself, while a "heart of flint" finds the place clear of mendicants, and may stoutly deny their very existence.

But, after all, six or seven years are but a span in the existence of a nation, and Verona has scarcely had time to realize the great change. The people of the lowest classes, and not only of the lowest, especially if they belong to the past generation, speak of "the Italians" as if they were foreign conquerors. The fate of the Veronese for seventy or eighty years was to alternate between French and Austrian rule. All they knew of government before the end of the last century was associated with the

Venetian Republic, and the Lion of St. Mark, as they well knew, had fallen never to rise again. They speak of "the Italians" precisely as they did of "the Tedeschi," and draw comparisons between the late and the present rule, not always favourable to these latter. The landlord of my hotel complained last evening that "*I'taliani*" had decreed the removal of all inn and shop-boards—a measure dictated by reasons which I was unable to fathom, and which has perhaps been enforced with some harshness and pedantry, but of which the Government and the Prefect must be perfectly innocent, as it is a matter of exclusively municipal concern. That "the Italians" are their own brethren, and that they come here not to govern, but to invite self-government, is more than can as yet enter into the comprehension of some of the most ignorant Veronese. But they are a quiet and docile, and at the same time a most intelligent race. Nowhere in Italy have I seen so quick an apprehension, so deep-rooted a love of the beautiful; nowhere so much knowledge of local monuments, or so keen an interest in local traditions; nowhere so much sense, such ready wit, such courtesy and amiability.

These, which are the gifts of Old Italy, are peculiarly characteristic of Old Venetia. What is said of Verona may equally apply to all the cities of what was called Terra Firma—Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, &c., most of whom, however, had not, like Verona, the unenviable advantage of harbouring

large Austrian garrisons, and depended more entirely on their natural resources. Many of these cities, and especially Padua, are showing symptoms of re-awakened energies in agricultural and industrial enterprise; nor can it be said that Venice herself is behind-hand, if we look to her imports and exports by land and sea, taken from the official reports of the *Camera di Commercio*:—

		IMPORTS.	EXPORTS.
By Sea,	1870	70,000,000 f.	51,000,000 f.
„	1871	93,000,000 f.	58,000,000 f.
„	1872	116,500,000 f.	53,000,000 f.
„	1873	169,000,000 f.	77,000,000 f.

		IMPORTS.	EXPORTS.
By Land,	1870	27,000,000 f.	21,000,000 f.
„	1871	31,000,000 f.	26,000,000 f.
„	1872	37,000,000 f.	28,000,000 f.
„	1873	46,000,000 f.	32,000,000 f.

showing a progressive increase, in four years, of 148 to 268 millions of lire importation, and of 116 to 211 millions exportation.

But alas! it will take far more than all this trade, and the glass manufactories, the wood-carvings and bronzes which have been of late rapidly reviving, to save the noble Queen of the Adriatic from utter extinction. The sands of the Brenta and other Alpine streams are everywhere silting up and choking her lagoons; Chioggia is already swamped, and a prey to marshy fevers; and it is with considerable difficulty that a sufficient depth is maintained in the main inlet to the city itself to

enable the steamers of the English Peninsular and Oriental line to bring to Venice as much of the Eastern trade as can be taken from Brindisi and Ancona. It is an evil of old date, and may be traced to the improvidence of the old Patrician Government in its dotage. But it has been considerably aggravated by the carelessness, or perhaps malice, of the Austrian rulers of later times, who, as if bent on the final destruction of the city, listened to the petitions of the Paduans, and, to deliver them from the ravages of the Brenta carried on in their territory, diverted the course of that river so as to cause it to flow into the lagoon. How the course of that and of other streams may now again be diverted so as to save Venice without again injuring Padua is a problem, the solution of which will require, theoretically, much study, and, practically, more labour and treasure than either Venetia, or even all Italy, can afford.

Being at Verona, my love of mountain scenery induced me to explore the Valley of the Adige and see a little of Tyrol.

The Italian frontier, as everybody knows, is on this side not marked by the chain of the Alps. Trent and its territory, although intensely Italian, are perhaps for ever severed from Italy. The Trentine came into the possession of the Austrian crown in remote times, being made over to the House of Habsburg by their Prince-Bishop, who exercised lordly sway over his diocese. The

Habsburg Princes tacked their new possession on to their county of Tyrol at a time when people were disposed of without in the least being consulted as to their own inclinations; and Tyrol, north and south, from the extreme northern point of the Vorarlberg, at Bregenz, on the Lake of Constance, to Riva, on the Lake of Garda, was made into one province. The Trentine were loyal and peaceful subjects enough in the good old despotic times. Like the rest of the Tyrolese, they had been treated by Austria as spoilt children, appointed to places of trust in the Lombardo-Venetian provinces, where many of them played an odious part as policemen and magistrates in political disturbances. Somehow, however, after 1848, the Trentine themselves caught the revolutionary infection. They felt that blood was thicker than water, and saw that the Adige flowed down to Verona and not up to the Brenner. They began to take pride in the name of Italians; and whenever their Deputies appeared in Austrian or German Diets, they invariably limited their acts to a protest that "they had no business there, and that their lot was cast with their brethren of Lombardy, Venetia and Piedmont."

The destinies of their Italian brethren were, however, matured, and they, the Trentino alone, were left out in the cold. They had, of course, to renounce, for the present, all hope of being annexed to the monarchy of Victor Emmanuel; they

consented to remain Austrians; but, like other Austrians, they wished to become a self-governing people. They wished to break the bond of union which joined them in one province with Tyrol; they wished a line of demarcation to be drawn between the German and the Italian nationality, and to have their centre no longer at Innsbruck, but at Trent.

But the difficulty lies in drawing the line between the races; for, although nothing is more practicable than to define what is to be understood by North and South Tyrol, it is by no means easy to separate the German from the Italian. The Trentine evidently consists of what once constituted the Bishopric of Trent, and this diocese forms a tolerably compact and homogeneous Italian district. But further up into the valley of the Adige, and in some of the adjacent valleys, the Italian element has been and is daily gaining ground, and to such an extent that the Trent people reckon their own Italian brethren at 350,000, the whole population of Tyrol being 885,000. By a somewhat curious anomaly, the German element seems, in the long run, to have lost its wonted power of expansiveness south of the Brenner, and to give way to the invasion and encroachment of the Southern race, precisely as, for his own part, the German treads on irresistibly and gains ground on the Scandinavian in Schleswig and Jutland. Nothing sounds more pathetic than the complaint of German

travellers, who declare that the sight of so many old German strongholds in the Tyrolese valleys being now *Verwalsched*, or Italianized, by the advancing tide of Southern immigration, gives them a feeling of home-sickness.

It is not easy to account for this upward movement of the Italian race to the Alps in modern times, or to explain its contrast with the opposite or receding movement in ancient and mediæval times. The valley of the Adige was, as I said, looked upon by the Germans as their principal inlet into Italy, and all their efforts were turned to strengthen their position along the Tridentine mountains from the Brenner to Verona. Traces of their military settlements may be seen in the names of such localities as Gossensass, or Gottensatz, the seat of the Goths. But precisely because the colonization was artificial and as it were by order, it led to a reaction in after times; and the Italians of the Middle Ages, driven from their cities of the plain by intestine feuds, ran for a refuge to the hills of Tyrol, as they did into the Grisons or the Valais, where many of the most illustrious Guelph and Ghibelline families sank into obscurity. More recently Italians have been led to these northern districts by their instincts as pedlars, as inn and coffee-house keepers. It is in the towns and villages, and along the highways especially, that they take up their abodes, preferring almost any trade to that of cultivators of the soil. The

whole valley of the Adige up to Botzen exhibits thus all the peculiarities of an Italian region. It is vain for the Germans to describe the language of Trent as a mixture of Italian and German dialects. It is a mixture of Lombard and Venetian, and a better Italian than is spoken at Milan, Turin or Bologna. At Trent, manners, features and complexion, as well as the popular costume, bespeak the Latin race; and Italian characteristics are perceptible not only among the townspeople, but also among the peasantry frequenting the market from the remotest rural districts. The Austrian Government so far admits undeniable facts that it always allowed the Trentine Italian schools, leaving the study of German optional with the pupils or their parents.

Above Botzen, along the valley of the Adige to Meran and along that of Eisach to Brixen and the Brenner, every trace of Italian nationality disappears. A traveller coming from Verona to Innsbruck will have little difficulty in deciding which race should have possession of the Alps, supposing that love of those mountains should constitute a right to have them. The Italian and the German equally cling to the highlands with peculiar fondness, exhibit the same reluctance to part with their little patches of land on the hill-side, and experience all a mountaineer's home-sickness away from them. But the Italian seems to settle among the mountains from the mere wanton pleasure of de-

stroying them. He is perpetually scraping and peeling off the woods, laying bare the hill-side, till it all crumbles and lays waste and cumbers the valley beneath. There is nothing more grand, but at the same time more savage and forbidding, than that long narrow gorge of the Adige which the traveller enters as he comes up from Verona, with the skirts of the Montebaldo between the Adige and the Lake of Garda on his left, and the hills above Verona on the other side—that narrow gorge which bears the name famous in history of "Chiusa dell' Adige." The contrast of the vivid green of the plain, and of the narrow strips of the valley, with the bleakness and ruggedness of the rocky masses piled up to the very heaven on either side could not be more impressive; but in the midst of the awe with which you look upon that stupendous scene, you wonder whether all that desolation of the mountain region was nature's work or man's, and the least knowledge of the Alps satisfies you that the devastation is in a great measure the result of man's improvidence and neglect. Evidence of this is afforded to you as you proceed. You come out of the narrow pass upon crossing the frontier line at Ala, and the valley expands before you at Roveredo and Trent, never closing again till you come to the confluence of the Eisach with the Adige at Botzen. Hardly anything can exceed the beauty, the richness and luxuriancy of the flat ground, and of the lower slopes of the valley. It is a little

Lombard plain in miniature, with the maize and rice fields alternating with meadows where the third crop of hay is now—mid September—gathered in, with the vine in festoons, and the pollard mulberry trees diversified with the walnut and chestnut in full growth. The hills in the immediate neighbourhood of the towns are as thickly studded with villas as the Turin *Collina*. But above and behind that mere green fringe of the valley the mountains are an open ground for all the elements of mischief to run riot in. It is all land-slip, ravine and precipice; all crumbling down, tumbling down unrestrained, the mountain-side everywhere seamed by the beds, now dry, of lawless torrents, the traces of whose ravages you may see traversing the verdant plain, choking up the channel of the main stream, filling up the lower ground with alternate patches of swamps and gravel-beds. The Trentine cultivates, not the mountains, but the bits of plain among the mountains. Whatever he tills of the mountain-side is sure to come down with the spring thaw or the autumn flood after a crop or two; he shaves as much of the mountain soil as he can reach and leaves the rock to itself; but in process of time the mountain avenges itself by sending down the very rock and carrying the war into the plain, where man, too late and too often inefficiently, strives to hold his own.

It is far otherwise in the German districts. Above Botzen, as you enter the valley of the Eisach, leav-

ing the Adige on your left, you immediately become aware that the region is inhabited by a race to whom forest trees are objects of religious care. The main stream is everywhere strongly walled in and embanked, and the mountain torrents, as they fall into it, are received in tidy channels cleverly scooped out and paved with broad flat stones like streets. The mountain-sides are all mantled over with green —meadow and pasture on the gentler slopes, fir woods up to the steepest summits; and wherever the mantle is at all torn, wherever the soil gives way, it is wonderful to see with what love and faith, with what patience and diligence, with what devotion the Tyrolese mountaineer is patching up, propping up from below, clearing the wreck, stopping the slips, darning and mending, and coaxing up the green again, by an ingenious lattice-work of sticks and withies, breaking the fall of the water, and compelling it to trickle harmlessly down instead of tumbling madly and working its furrows into the very core of the mountain. What beauty this unwearied attention to the soil has given to the districts of the German Tyrol the traveller may perceive as he advances through the beautiful gorge of Klausen into the open valley of Brixen. At Klausen above Botzen, as at Chiusa above Verona, we have the gorge, and at Brixen as at Trent, we have the open valley. Yet what a contrast! Both the Italian and the German districts have beauty, but in the Trentino territory nature is beautiful almost in spite

of man; in Tyrol the beauty is of man's own making.

Yet both regions have been for many years subject to the same steady and provident, if somewhat harsh Austrian rule. The same forest laws have been in vigour, the soil and in a great measure the climate are the same, for the valleys of the Adige and the Eisach are both equally south of the main Alpine chain. It is evidently an affair of race. The Latin is fitted for life in the plain; the German is apt to make the best of any region in which his lot is cast. Travel through Bavaria and Austria, and then cross from the German to the Swiss, French or Italian Alps, to the Apennines, the Pyrenees or any of the Spanish sierras, and you will see that the tendency of the conservative German is to clothe and improve the mountains, that of the revolutionary Italian, Provençal, French,

CHAPTER XII.

GLIMPSES OF OLD ITALY.

Rail to Orvieto—Old Italian Cities—Orvieto, Inside and Out—Departed Greatness—Influence of the Church—Railways—Forsaken Places—Phases of Religious Life—Aspects of Social Life.

THE trunk of railway between Orte and Orvieto is now open. This has become the direct line from Rome to Siena, and will soon shorten the journey to Florence and all the north. The Government has long been at work, hitherto with indifferent success, to settle accounts with the bankrupt Company of the Roman Railways, and to constitute a new society, to which the management of the Roman, Neapolitan and Sicilian lines will be entrusted, thus placing the whole net of the Peninsula under the control of only two companies, the Alta Italia and the Ferrovie Meridionali. This substitution of great general for petty local interests can hardly fail, when it is accomplished, to prove beneficial to the travelling public. We have, in the meanwhile, gained this advantage, that we reach this old city of "*Urbs Vetus*" in little more than three hours, a pleasure from which the financial distress of the

Roman Railways, and the consequent inability of the Company to push on the works of this line with sufficient alacrity, had long debarred us.

Henceforth Orvieto will be considered a suburb of Rome, and a visit to the Eternal City will necessarily involve an excursion to a place which was indeed an "old town" long before Romulus had ploughed his line of walls round the Aventine. Rome is in need of such suburbs, as she has none nigher, unless we except those *Castelli* of the Latin and Sabine Hills, Albano, Frascati and Tivoli, which are not very near, where the living is as expensive as in Rome itself and the air not much more salubrious. To those whom business, study, or pleasure, retains in the new capital of Italy, Orvieto will offer a very pleasant summer refuge, somewhat nearer than the Umbrian mountain retreats of Narni and Spoleto, and with greater capabilities for rural accommodation.

To say that Orvieto is a "very old" Italian city is to say that its position is one of unrivalled beauty, for all those ancient Latin, Umbrian and Etruscan races, who knew the value of fresh air, pitched their homes as high on their craggy mountain summits as their goats could scramble. Security from a neighbour's attack was perhaps less an object with them than a wish to escape that subtle enemy—the fever—which haunts the lower valleys and the plains throughout Italy. Health must be purchased here at the expense of much toil and trouble; and not a

little of the strength and beauty of the old native races was undoubtedly owing to the hardships and exertions to which the ruggedness of their highland residences exposed them. It takes three-quarters of an hour for an omnibus drawn by four gallant, cantering horses to convey the passenger from the railway station to his inn at Orvieto—a little journey at his journey's end. This is an inconvenience which is already effecting a momentous revolution throughout the country, where localities like Bergamo, Biella, and other hilly towns, are rapidly sliding down from their breezy heights and clustering round the nuclei of new towns on the level, as it cannot be hoped in all cases to reach the top of a mountain by such a wonder of engineering skill as it has been found practicable at Siena. It is to be hoped, however, that this movement, which threatens Perugia, Assisi, and other glorious and healthy spots in Italy with eventual abandonment, will not soon reach Orvieto.

Anything more grand than this rock-girt citadel, as viewed from any part of the surrounding plain, or anything more charming than the panorama of the broad valley of the Tiber and its affluents, the Chiana and the Paglia, as surveyed from the bastions of the old castle, or from some culminating points round the city walls, it requires no little effort to conceive. The spring is up to this time —April 5—unaccountably late, and the landscape is as parched and arid as it can be at no other time

of the year; yet even utterly divested as it is of its foliage, even white with the accumulation of March dust, it displays sufficient loveliness to give an earnest of what a paradise it will be a fortnight hence: a volcanic region of unmatched fertility, broken up into a great maze of hills, swelling all round like sea-waves, and rising in the rear range after range, with the snow of the Apennine crest for a background.

It it only in an out-of-the-way place like Orvieto that a traveller becomes intimately acquainted with the good and bad of the character of the Italian people. The whole of his country is to the Italian what his ancestral castle is to a broken-down nobleman. The sense of past greatness creates stubborn resistance to present progress, and stands in the way of future improvement. An immense amount of the old social edifice must be removed before the foundation of the new building can be laid. In the presence of the monuments of their forefathers, a dispiriting feeling seems to creep to the heart of these people; a consciousness that, do what they may, they will never be what they have been. Go with the Orvietans to their cathedral, the loveliest specimen of Gothic the world can boast, with a façade as "worthy to be put under a glass case," as the Campanile of Giotto, or follow them to the newly-discovered Etruscan tombs on a neighbouring hill on the Bolsena road, where frescoes three thousand years old look as fresh as if painted yesterday,

—and you will find men even of the very lowest classes quite at home with the subject, who will discourse as fluently and enthusiastically about it as if they had made art and antiquity the pursuits of their lives. The inn you stay in is the "Albergo delle Belle Arti," your landlord is an artist's son, and he will show you Luca Signorelli and Fra Angelico's pictures in the marvellously beautiful San Brizio chapel, gazing at them himself with the same fresh, intense, and unaffected enjoyment with which he has admired them a thousand times, and as if he had never seen them before.

All these glories of the past, these wonders of ancient and mediæval genius, however, the Italians must feel are passing away, and it is full time that a new existence should develope itself in the land. Ruined churches, deserted convents, and unfinished or dismantled palaces cumber two-thirds of the inhabited quarters of Orvieto, and from a large district, *Orti*, or kitchen gardens, vineyards and olive grounds, have effaced every trace of the buildings with which it once was crowded. Everything bears witness to the energy, the prosperity, and the magnificence of former races. There is a palace in the rear of this hotel fit for the accommodation of a monarch's household, which never had, and never will have, a tenant, the family whose home it was to be having probably ruined themselves by their extravagance in building it.

Another palace, not far from the Duomo, designed by Vignola, and warranted to stand to all eternity, all finished, but without doors or windows, is offered for sale at 7,600 f. (304*l.*); and facing the Cathedral itself, there is the carcass of a building, a mass of ruins inside, but hidden by a façade of considerable pretensions, with a splendid portal flanked by granite columns, something like a great tombstone to keep decay and corruption out of sight. The past is dying all round about us—a long, lingering death sure to overcome all things in the end, yet tasking the combined efforts of time and man to hasten it. The fine Gothic church of San Domenico will probably never recover the effects of the earthquake which severely battered it a twelvemonth since—1873—and the rich tomb of Cardinal di Brago, by Arnolfo de Lapi, which constituted its best ornament, has suffered from the ill-treatment of the Italian soldiery quartered in it, in 1860, what it never had to endure at the hands of the barbarians of the Middle Ages. The Duomo itself is in tolerable repair, but the priests who so long had it in their keeping never scrupled to hide the fine pictures of the San Brizio Chapel with the entablature of their choir, with their tawdry altar ornaments, and with sepulchral tablets; and where these have been removed, thanks to the interference of our landlord's father, Potani, a member of the St. Luke's Academy at Rome, the plaster of the walls has crumbled down, and large

patches of the glorious frescoes are irreparably lost. The same disaster has befallen the Pinturicchios in a Franciscan Convent outside the walls; and the frescoes in the Etruscan tombs on the Bolsena road, before mentioned, after escaping obliteration for above thirty centuries, are no sooner brought back to the light of day than destructive insects settle upon them and gnaw at the colours and at the *tufa* behind them, with an activity before which the whole of these rare specimens of primæval art will speedily vanish.

We see in every direction illustrations of the melancholy "*Sic transit.*" There is evidently more in the past than all the zeal and veneration of the present has power to preserve—a clear proof that a country must be something more than a museum, that man cannot exist by contemplation alone, and that there is a duty incumbent on every age to live for itself, to work out its own ends, give evidence of its productiveness, and leave its own mark.

A glance at Orvieto and at the surrounding country will leave little doubt as to the main, if not the only, cause of the decline of all intellectual and moral, as well as material, life in Italy, especially in these Southern Provinces which were so long subjected to Papal rule. The church found in Mediæval Italy, in the Lombard, Tuscan and Umbrian cities, an exuberant activity, proud independent spirits, noble aspirations—a people

emerging from barbarism, advancing on the paths of a new civilization. The Church well understood and accomplished her task at first, which was to tame and direct those transcendant energies, to allay those stormy passions, and to awaken that faith which lay deep at the heart of the Italians, blended with their innate love of all that was good and beautiful. It was under the inspiration of that faith that stately ecclesiastical edifices arose, like this unrivalled Duomo of Orvieto—all those grand churches and town halls, the cost of which shows how little the people cared for the comforts and luxuries of private life so long as they could lodge their Religion and their *Signoria* in becoming splendour. The Italians of the Middle Ages were artists as well as Christians. Their priests turned all the wealth and genius of the country to the development of Christian art. But art, as I said, cannot be to a nation the bread of life, neither can religion as priests understand it. It seems hardly credible that the city and territory of Orvieto could at any time have been rich enough to maintain the score of huge Benedictine, Dominican, Franciscan, and other monastic establishments now crumbling to ruins within the walls, or those going to decay on every mountain-top of the environs; and hardly less incredible that the people, if they had the riches, should have allowed the priests so utterly to absorb and so miserably to waste them. The disproportion between the means

and the end was apparent long before the system which brought it about went to ruin. The Pope himself was compelled to desecrate and shut up superfluous churches and suppress parasitic fraternities. But the removal of the cause came too late and was too slow; it did not, and will not for a long time, cure the effects. The monks had in these old Papal dominions to a great extent usurped the place belonging in other countries to the landed aristocracy. Upon the abolition of monastic orders, the people alone were left without leaders of any kind. The few noble families remaining are ground to dust. The Gualterio, the most conspicuous, and called the "*Marchesi*" *par excellence*, virtually ended, so far as Orvieto is concerned, with Filippo, the patriot statesman and historian, whose funeral was performed in Rome a few weeks since, who died poor, and whose only surviving son has grown up a stranger to his father's deserted home. Deprived of these natural chiefs, the people look for guidance to the Government, to their poorly-paid sub-Prefect, or to their unpaid Syndic and Municipal Councillors. But a free Government, as that of Italy is now, only helps those who help themselves. Yet, if the great landowners are gone, the land still remains, and if the people could and would do the work Providence has set them, they might find enough in the wine, oil and silk their territory could be made to produce, not only to supply the immediate wants of the present, but

to turn to such good purposes the ruins of the past as to use them as the best materials for the edifice of the future.

It is greatly to be regretted that those same railways which have made such quaint old interesting places as Orvieto accessible to the traveller, should at the same time have placed other places, fully as curious, altogether out of his track. The progress made by "iron-roads," as the Italians call them, since the unification of the country is more than considerable, and must in no small degree have contributed to that development of national well-being to which railway enterprise looked for its returns. In January, 1859, Italy had altogether 1,707 kilomètres of railways, very nearly half of which, 850 kilomètres, belonged to Piedmont, while the kingdom of the Two Sicilies had only 99 kilomètres, and the Pontifical States 20 kilomètres. At the end of last year (1873) the various Italian Railways in activity extended over a length of 6,071 kilomètres, implying an addition of 5,071 kilomètres in fourteen years, or an average increase of 362 kilomètres every year. And it should be borne in mind that during this same period the national roads either already in use or in progress of construction were 9,906 kilomètres in extent, the provincial roads 27,996 kilomètres, and the Communal roads 97,000 kilomètres; altogether 134,902 kilomètres of roads. For their construction or improvement the State alone has already spent

1,270,000*l.*, and a Bill authorizing expenses for the same purpose to the further amount of 1,720,000*l.* has been voted by Parliament. Though railway enterprise in Italy is still very far from showing the same degree of activity, or achieving the same splendid results as it has done in England, in France and Germany, or even in Belgium and Holland, it cannot be denied that much, and almost enough, has been done in most Italian districts to meet immediate wants. The great northern plain of Piedmont and Lombardy is covered with a perfect net of lines crossing one another in every direction; and throughout the length of the Peninsula, where the mountains raised stubborn obstacles at every step, the traveller has the choice of five longitudinal lines—two maritime lines, the one from Bologna to Brindisi on the Adriatic, the other along the Mediterranean from Nice or Ventimiglia to Genoa, Spezia, Leghorn and Rome; and three inland lines —one from Rome to Florence *viâ* Perugia, a second from Rome to Florence *viâ* Siena, and a third from Rome to Ancona *viâ* Falconara, all joining at Bologna with as many as five distinct passes across the Apennines. The opening of the line between Orte and Orvieto has completed the line from Rome to Siena and Florence, and the achievement of the tunnel at the Bracco between Sestri and Spezia has established an uninterrupted communication along the Riviera, or sea-shore, parallel to the old Cornice road, constituting now the shortest route to Rome

for all travellers coming from Southern France as well as from Genoa, and even from Turin and Milan. The Adriatic line from Bologna and Rimini to Ancona and Brindisi, the track of the English Overland Mail; has already reached beyond Brindisi, branching from Bari to Lecce and Taranto, and hence coasting the gulf of that name on its way to the extreme point of Reggio, in Calabria.

But, as I said, what the traveller has gained by his facility to get over space, he has lost in actual time; for his train whirls him from one end to the other in his journey; it gives him no leisure for any place of interest that may lie near him at the minor stations, and less than none for any place that happens to be out of his track. We cannot afford, because we are no longer compelled, to see what used to delight us when the stages were shorter, and longer rest was enforced at the end of every day's progress. What, alas! have I seen lately of the beautiful Valley of the Tiber, along which, barely sixteen years ago, I tarried for a fortnight, with a sober-paced *vetturino*, giving a day or two to Narni and Terni, to Assisi and Perugia, to any of the delightful spots on my right or left, my journey unlimited as to time, yet not one hour hanging wearily on my hands? Or how could I again loiter about the towns of Upper and Lower Romagna, and the Marches, as I did, between the days of Solferino and Castelfidardo, driving my *sediolo* or one-horse chaise from place to place, and

putting up here and there at noon and night? Or how could I now be induced to repeat my pedestrian excursions of that same happy period to visit such world-forgotten places as Gubbio or Urbino, Camerino, San Marino and other spots, only to be reached under what our present smooth means of locomotion represent to us as difficulties, only to be confronted after mature deliberation, and overcome by indomitable strength of will? The manliness of our former mode of travelling has deserted us. We sit and doze at the rate of thirty or forty miles an hour, satisfied with little exertion and less instruction, much speed and more *ennui*.

Of these beautiful lands of Umbria and the Marches I can give little more than faint recollections. I was with King Victor Emmanuel on his first visit to Ancona, when, being lodged in the palace of the Cardinal Legate, he said he felt stifled by the close air and "priestly smell" pervading the apartment, and had his quarters removed to a private villa outside the town. His new subjects immediately took the hint, and the great business of these late Papal provinces was to cleanse and fumigate themselves thoroughly, so as to do away with the traces of that "sacerdotal odour" which proved so offensive to royal nostrils. Everywhere daylight was let into the precincts of claustral abodes. Convents and nunneries were thrown open; and as the leading, the fixed ideas of the age in Italy were then war and education, the common

uses those desecrated cloisters were almost invariably put to were barracks and schools. In most of the poorest and most dilapidated mountain towns there seemed literally to be a monastery at every third house within the walls. The inmates clung fast to their religious homes, and protested they would only be taken from them by main force. They had of course their own wish; they were driven out with little ceremony, and their protest broke nobody's bones.

Nothing at the time struck me as more wonderful, as I witnessed the results of this vital change, than the little hold these monastic drones had, after so many centuries of uncontrolled ascendency, gained even upon the most besotted multitude. Monachism seemed to vanish from Italy and to leave no trace. Neither the instruction some of the Orders professed to impart, nor the dole at the convent gate, fostering the beggary it pretended to relieve, elicited one pang of regret from the people's heart, not one scruple of retrospective gratitude. The Jesuits were the first to decamp; and they went unbidden, for they were too well aware of the people's disposition to await their tender mercies. The scales of gross superstition fell from Italian eyes, and the glare of daylight proved by no means overpowering to organs so long doomed to utter darkness. I was surprised at Loreto to see many of the dealers in beads, medals, chaplets and rosaries who had shut up shop from sudden lack of custom. I visited the

Sanctuary and found it nearly empty, although the crafty priests strove hard to put off their inevitable doom, and so far gave in to the spirit of the age as to deck out the be-jewelled shrine of their Black Image with red, green and white lamps, and to manufacture little wax Victor Emmanuels and Garibaldis to be thrown into the bargain to the purchasers of their little waxen Madonnas. The number of pilgrims was very scanty, and consisted chiefly of the *ciocciari* or sandal-shod mountaineers from the most benighted districts of the Sabina and Abruzzo. Go down among the people, throw out one word about the Pope-King and priestly rule, and the wonder then was not at the completeness of the revolution, but at the degree of brute force that it must have taken to put it off so long.

Matters were however carried too far, and something like reaction was inevitable; and the reaction like the revolution came from on high. It was the King himself, his royal family, and some of the Court nobility who deemed it good policy to send presents of necklaces to the Virgin at Loreto, and pastoral rings, jewelled mitres and croziers to St. Januarius at Naples, precisely as Mazzini, when Dictator of the Roman Republic, had placed the gilt and painted Vatican carriages at the disposal of the miraculous *Bambino* of Araceli to relieve the toil of the little doll's progress on its obstetric visits. The people will of course follow their leaders. The martial spirit which upon the ex-

hortation of the Emperor Napoleon after Magenta should have made "soldiers of the Italians that they might become citizens," was grievously damped by the disasters of Custozza and Lissa. Military musters fell out of fashion, and processions were again the rage. The Municipal Councils of Milan, Genoa and other civilized cities are even now torn by dissensions as to the expediency of allowing the *Corpus Domini*, or the carcase of some saint, or more generally the *Viatico*, or Last Sacrament, to be paraded through the streets with all the old rites of bell and candle, the clericals or revivalists, as a rule, carrying the victory; and in the immediate neighbourhood of Florence, of Lucca, and throughout Tuscany, the foul monastic birds, especially the greasy Capuchins, have almost everywhere been suffered or invited to go back to their nests.

The fever will probably not last long; the Italians are prone to follow French fashion wherever it lead; and their processions and pilgrimages, their winking Madonnas and bleeding Sacred Hearts, are only pale copies, poor parodies of Lourdes, La Salette and Paray le Monial; but shame and self-loathing will be sure to ensue, and the ultimate result will be to leave the people without a religion of any kind, unless indeed the example of San Giovanno del Dozzo and other parishes of the Diocese of Mantua spreads far, and the peasantry, spurning episcopal authority, call

together vestry meetings and choose their own parsons, vindicating the right of the laity to their full share in the government of the Church—an arrangement which, with little encouragement from the thinking and ruling classes, it would be only too easy to bring about.

It was curious to look at the state of the old Italian social edifice at the time of my visit to the most backward districts to which I referred, at the moment in which it seemed that new institutions were likely rapidly to modify it, leading to new combinations of which no stretch of imagination could well calculate the results. Nine out of ten of those minor towns on the Apennines had no other source of existence than the residence of the owners of the soil throughout the extent of their territory. What are called in England county people and county society—all the families of the nobility and gentry which are scattered here and there in their halls, courts and other country seats—are in Italy concentrated and huddled together in their provincial towns. In such places as Fortimpopoli or Bagnacavallo, Lugo or Sant' Arcangelo, Gubbio or Camerino, it is usual to find ten or twelve or more patrician houses, families boasting some of the oldest and finest blood in their veins, fractions of those proud feudal races who once lorded it over every inch in the land of their respective districts. The lofty mansions which their forefathers built, rising in the centre of narrow and noisome streets,

still exhibit traces of splendour and taste as well as of the wealth of their former owners. Painted ceilings, gilt doors and shutters, elaborately ornamented frames and lintels,—every house was particular and won fame for some special artistical hobby of its own,—and here and there the rickety remnants of quaintly-carved cupboards, cabinets, heavy chests, arm-chairs and other sumptuous and ponderous furniture. They were the dwellings of a race who could think of no better use for their riches than the development of the beautiful—amateurs, *dilettanti*, who looked upon "Italian" and "man of taste" as synonymous.

The mansions are still there, and in them, lost in the vastness of interminable apartments, the dwindled generation live, bearing still the marks of their illustrious descent in their features, in their bearing, in their instinctive good breeding. But the houses are a world too wide for the inmates—too large for their parcelled lands and reduced revenues, for the modest and somewhat niggardly style of their living. The gorgeous halls are silent and desolate, cold and squalid too, dusty and dingy, and the hand of decay is everywhere, on persons no less than things. You call upon the *Marchese*, or *Principe;* you step from a large to a larger hall, from a dark to a darker room, ushered in by a bewigged domestic in a threadbare livery. You find your magnate in a poky inner chamber, dimly lighted, if by night, by the old-fashioned three-

beaked *lucerna*, with his slippered feet if it is winter, on his four-knobbed brass *scaldino*—his stately lady with her Bologna dog on her lap; his prim young Marchesina fresh from the convent at her embroidery frame; his chaplain and perhaps his doctor on lower stools making up the party—the master of the house, a shrunken old man, but every inch a gentleman and a nobleman, greeting you, as he half rises from his *fauteuil*, with an easy grace and affability, showing that he knows how to honour a stranger without forgetting what is due to himself. Imperfectly educated, utterly untravelled, these meek-hearted scions of a broken-down provincial aristocracy are slowly falling to and below the people's level, without mixing with or merging into the people. They husband their paltry income by a strict, grovelling economy; improve it by prudent intermarriages among their own set, by the limitation of the number of their offspring, by the cessation of all convivial festivity, and almost of social intercourse. At the *caffè* or *casino* the men meet occasionally, but the ladies know next to nothing of each other, and only see, without speaking to, each other at their respective hereditary opera-boxes as they smile, and nod, and flirt their fans on recognizing one another across the house; for there is an opera, for example, as well as a university at Urbino, at Camerino, as in every town of equal and even minor pretensions; and it would be curious to know with what sums

the theatre alone, especially in the Carnival season, walks off in these poverty-stricken communities. There is no circulation of ideas in the interior of these antiquated Italian homes; scarcely any book of any kind—save some old library, the legacy of some crimson-robed or purple-stockinged uncle of the family—and absolutely no reading, no necessity felt for reading. While this higher class and this used-up generation is slowly but incessantly dying off, the middle class has yet to rise; and the lowest orders, entirely dependent on their "betters" for employment, have hardly any trade or industry, hardly any real independent existence of their own.

Anything more depressing than life in Italy away from the great centres could not be easily imagined, nor do I know whether social improvement can to any extent be relied on as the consequence of political change. The son of some one of the old *Marchesi* or *Principi*, of which I have endeavoured to produce a specimen, may find a career in the army or navy, or may be met with in the lobbies of Montecitorio as a Deputy in the Chamber. If he is a rational, practical man, he lives and learns, travels a little, mixes with people of other ranks and other countries, and, laying aside ancestral honours, aspires to be a self-made man. Some of the families still hold on to the land, and Italy can after all be nothing if not an agricultural country. Country-life, the actual residence of the land-owner on his lands, becomes

every day less unfrequent. For six and seven months thrifty persons begin to find it possible to enjoy the company of their farmers and bailiffs. With the return of public security and the improved means of locomotion this intercourse between town and country will become more incessant: the land-owner will be made one with his land, and he will move from his rural residence for a few months' relaxation to the capital. This movement will raise the condition of the provinces, little as it may benefit the small provincial towns. These will either cease to be, or will find in the development of trade and industry a new reason for existence. Agriculture in Italy admits of indefinite improvement, and townsmen may lend a hand towards the improvement of the husbandman's produce, oil, wine and silk. The example of Como or Bergamo, of Biella or Intra, and other minor places in Piedmont, Lombardy and Tuscany, proves how thriving a provincial community may become, even without ceasing to be dull.

CHAPTER XIII.

UP TO ABRUZZO.

Italy beyond the Railways—An Excursion in the Apennines—Rieti and the Sabina—Aquila and the Abruzzo—The Country—The People—An Anglo-Italian Household.

CARDINAL GUIBERT, Archbishop of Paris, lately a frequent visitor to Rome, has been compelled to acknowledge that four years of Italian occupation have already done something towards imparting movement and animation to the city. Less than four times that period and a short residence, of the King's Government have greatly beautified that Florence which Samuel Rogers already half a century ago described as "fairest of all the fairest cities of the earth"; and more than in either the former Grand-Ducal or the Papal capital the instinct of a new life, as we have seen, has developed itself in the towns of "Upper Italy," Turin, Genoa, Milan, Bologna. North of the Apennines even the rural districts are struggling hard to keep pace with their respective centres. There the railway is everywhere superseding the diligence; intercourse with the rest of Europe finds its channels through four great Alpine lines—the Cornice, Mont Cenis, the

Brenner and the Sömmering—and the Italians contribute forty millions of francs (1,600,000*l.*) towards the construction of a fifth line—that still greater Gotthard track which is to make Genoa the Mediterranean port of Germany. In the north, as well as in Tuscany, the work is done; and in spite of bad years, heavy taxes, and a still imperfect organization the profits are perceptible. The stir is everywhere apparent; well-being, though not general, is gradually spreading. There are regions in Lombardy which keep up the race with some of the best in Germany, and leave some of the worst in France considerably in the rear.

Blessed however as all Italy is by nature from the Alps to the sea, no one can doubt that her beauty, her wealth and happiness would appear greater at every step on a progress from north to south, if the development of man's energies were at all commensurate with the liberality of God's gifts. Were it not for the Neapolitans, those who have seen that "*Pompa maggior della Natura*," as Tasso describes the Campanian regions, might acknowledge the old saying "*Vedi Napoli e mori*" to be no idle boast.

But the Neapolitans are there, and eke the Sicilians; and those two southern kingdoms harbour little less than one-half of the population of Italy and there the priests, the beggars, the Camorra, the Maffia are still in possession and almost in the ascendant; and little has hitherto been

accomplished beyond banishing the pigs from the pavement of the Chiaia and Toledo. It was pleasant in Papal and Bourbon times to be able to refer the people's degradation to civil and religious misrule; but it begins to be felt that government is a trade in which the tools are made out of the material upon which one works; that "Italy *for* the Italians" can only be Italy *by* the Italians, and that there is much, mere matter of race, which, even in such cities as Rome, Naples and Palermo, will long resist the influence of good laws and freedom, of the rail, the wire, the school and the printing press.

Still the greatest calamity of old Italy was the difference between town and country, the estrangement of the rural from the city population; and this evil, grievous as it was throughout the Peninsula, was most striking in the south, which never enjoyed even such sluggish and hampered means of communication as the north could boast, and where indeed travelling was as slow, uncomfortable and dangerous as in Morocco or Spain. Railways have now reached Naples, and the main lines have spread far to the south, to some of the unexplored wilds of Puglia and Calabria; but, as yet, the seed has fallen on barren soil: a country cannot live by the rail alone, and in the south of Italy, as in Spain, railways have been constructed in obedience either to political and strategical exigencies, or to commercial and financial specu-

lations, altogether irrespective of the real wants and interests of the regions they traversed.

It was therefore from necessity rather than choice that, in spite of the mad hurry in which when I travel I always am to "get on," in the early days of November I left Rome and visited some of the provinces of Sabina and Abruzzo, a few score of miles beyond the track of the railways. I left the railway at the Terni station, three hours from Rome, on the way to Florence and Ancona, and posted to Rieti, whence I proceeded by the same conveyance to Aquila, the very centre of one of the Abruzzese provinces. There was a lull in the political life of the capital, I had plenty of time on my hand, and to travel by horse power rather than steam was an unwonted, therefore an enjoyable luxury. I feared we might have bad weather, and my expectations were fully realized. We were awaited at Terni by a thorough Italian autumnal downpour as we alighted at the station, got almost thoroughly drenched before we clambered into our places in an open *coupé*, and had to stand the brunt of shower after shower in front, while we were assailed in the rear by the treacherous element as it leaked through the crazy roof of the ramshackle vehicle and crept stealthily down our backs and under our seats, till it reached our only true waterproofs—our skins.

With all this drawback, however, the journey was far from unpleasant; the air felt fresh and balmy after unwholesome Rome; the road was smooth and

compact, and the bells jingling at our horses' heads —the cattle were in every respect better than the clumsy conveyance they were put to—were sweet music after the rattle and clatter, the puffs and groans and unearthly shrieks of the steam-engine. Between Terni and Aquila there is a drive of between ten and twelve hours, and we accomplished it in two days. Our way out of Terni lay across the ridge that separates the Velino from the Neva, and the great fall which pours the whole volume of waters of one valley into the other glanced and glittered for a long track of the way through gaps in the luxuriant foliage far beneath our feet. Presently we came down to the Velino, and ascended its valley, which widened as we advanced till it spread out into the pride of the ancient Sabine territory—the Plain of Rieti. At Rieti we slept, and on the second day we crossed the old frontier near Civita Ducale, and the same valley of the Velino lay to the right and left of us between its two great mountain-ranges, which rose and grew in majesty and beauty as we wound up to Antrodoco, whence a narrow and toilsome pass let us into the very heart of the Apennines—into the great cluster of mountains which six centuries ago Frederick II., that Italianized German Emperor, chose for the perch of his "Eagle" or *Aquila*, giving both being and name to a comparatively modern city.

The country on our way was lovely. Away from the towns the population was sparse and scanty,

the habitations being wretched and squalid beyond conception. The men in the Sabina still wear the *Camicione*—the long white hempen shirt common to many parts of the Marches and Umbria, which constitutes a labouring countryman's only upper and under garment in summer, and which is probably the same garment which originally won the people of Cisalpine Gaul the appellation of *gens togata*, in contradistinction to the *gens braccata*, their Transalpine brethren. In colder weather, and in these Sabine districts, the *camicione* is worn somewhat shorter, and instead of the bare legs it allows a view of the nether garments donned for the season; and, for a holiday, it is fastened round the neck with a broad, deep-scarlet collar, distinctive of the well-to-do boor. The women's costume is commonplace—a high, tight stomacher, stiff petticoats of coarse stuff but flaming colours, and the square three-folded kerchief, the *veletta*, a head-gear in universal use throughout the whole mountain region in Italy. Mixed with these two-legged creatures, driven by them along the road, labouring with them in the fields, or making themselves at home with them on the sill and vestibule of their dwellings, were their four-footed friends—the jet-black, arched-backed, long-legged, dissipated-looking pigs, the sleek, long-horned bullocks, the lank, half-starved horses, with large flocks of sheep and turkeys on their way from the exhausted mountain-pastures to the fatter bottoms of the Campagna, and

eventually to the shambles, and to the festive Christmas board of the great city.

The country is fruitful and not uncultivated. The vineyards spread far and wide up almost to the mountain summits, and every tree in the plain still bears the straggling boughs of the vine, which hangs in festoons from branch to branch; for the picturesque but unthrifty custom, as old as Virgil, of "wedding the vine to the elm" has not yet been given up in these primitive districts, though it is rapidly disappearing in the north of Italy, where the vine so trained formerly produced very poor wine, and where now, owing to some unaccountable circumstance in the soil or atmosphere, it refuses to bear any fruit at all. The hill-sides and the valley are still tolerably well wooded; the olive, the chestnut and walnut grow up in full luxuriancy, interspersed with those sturdy oaks which were the pride of ancient Italy, and some of which are still spared in consideration of what the Irish cottager designates as the "jintleman as pays the rint." But the higher ridges are cruelly seamed by the watercourses, which ravage large districts of the valley, and we find it difficult to identify the summit of what is called "Monte Calvo," owing to the fact that the whole range stood before us in the same savage baldness and barrenness.

What would strike an Englishman most painfully in our progress was the scarcity and wretchedness of rustic habitations, and the almost total absence

of gentlemen's seats. The whole region, with all its loveliness, has a forsaken, forbidding look; for the frontier between the Papal and Neapolitan territories has been for centuries the haunt of brigandage. Fifteen of the last batch of these malefactors were to be seen only a few months before our visit, penned up in an iron cage, the dock of the court of justice in Aquila; and the country is only gradually recovering from the terrors which from time immemorial rendered residence in an isolated dwelling impossible for any one who was not a brigand or an abettor of brigands. And the state of things which till so lately made Abruzzo unsafe is still the same that scares the traveller from some districts of Basilicata and Calabria, and from all the western provinces of Sicily. Without full security for the labourer's cottage, without frequent intercourse between the cottager and his landlord, the cultivation of the land must inevitably be slovenly and the civilization of the people backward. The peasantry here, huddled up in their close and noisome villages, wearied out with the several miles' journey which lay between them and the field they tilled, unenlightened by their master's intelligence, unaided by his capital, and unsoftened by his comparative refinement, would have wallowed in sloth and ignorance, even if their priests and monks had not encouraged their indolent habits, and hallowed their vagrant and mendicant propensities both by

precept and example. The Sabina and the Abruzzo are now, it is asserted, free from open and systematic brigandage; but something of the old robber spirit still lurks in the heart of the loose part of the uneducated peasantry; and some of them might not perhaps under certain circumstances very strongly resist the promptings of that "occasion which makes the man thief." This is still far from being the country where a Dives could safely walk about with gold in the open palm of his hand. To inspire the population with that thorough security on which agriculture must rely, several new lines of railway and many miles of roads, an efficient police, good safe prisons and high gallows, besides the schoolmaster's work, are sorely required; and it will perhaps be found that mere force of habit and traditional apathy will insist on treading the old rugged paths, even when broad, smooth and safe ways are thrown open. It is melancholy to think that the very qualities by which the people of old Italy mainly distinguished themselves are among the material obstacles to the improvement of the present generation. The old Italians might well boast that they built for eternity. But their buildings unfortunately were not for themselves alone. Those gloomy dungeon-like mansions, those lofty citadels, perched upon steep rocks or airy summits, which form the envy of the modern architect and the delight of the poet and artist, are neither suited to our wants and usages, nor can

they be moved out of the way to make room for structures better answering our purposes. Italian towns, beginning with Rome, as I believe I said, must either in a great measure be left as they are, or they must cease to be. To widen the streets, to level the ground, to open sewers and build chimneys, to let in gas, to hang bells, and simply to remove the rubbish of ages, is work for Titans—and Vandals. Towns and houses were fortresses and are now prisons. Our elders deprived themselves of air and space for the sake of security; and we find now that not only the wealth of the present age, but also the treasures of the past, must be sacrificed as the price of good, wholesome breathing-room. Hence it is no easy matter to utilize, as some persons propose, the population crowded in these provincial towns for manufacturing purposes. Whatever else Italy may one day become, she seems intended to be before all things an agricultural community; and it seems idle to think of trade where all the resources of husbandry are so far from being exhausted.

There are, however, branches of industry in which the cultivation of the soil and the application of its produce may go hand in hand; and we see now great efforts made in the north of Italy to weave the silk which till lately was almost entirely exported as raw material to France. Upon the same principle I saw at Rieti a very creditable attempt to establish a beetroot sugar manufactory.

It was found sixteen years ago that the beetroot of the Sabine territory, as doubtless that of all Southern Italy, contains a larger proportion of saccharine matter than the same root in Transalpine countries; and the idea sprang up in the mind of some person at Rieti to enter into competition with the many hundred sugar-houses already flourishing in France and Germany. That first experiment however most fatally miscarried, owing to the roguery of a French contractor, who embezzled the money which had been entrusted to him for the purchase of the necessary machinery. But a new society was organized two years ago, with a capital of 1,000,000 f. (40,000*l.*), one-fourth of which was subscribed by Count Vincentini, a young nobleman of Rieti, and a good specimen of the Italian aristocracy of the future. A large new building has been erected in the immediate neighbourhood of the city—for the adaptation of old convents and palaces would have cost considerably more—a complete set of machinery was sent for from Germany; and the mill has already been at work for eighteen months, with encouraging success, employing about 200 workmen, and promoting the cultivation of beetroot, which may easily be extended to the whole district.

It is not to be supposed that the enterprise will prove at first very remunerative; partly because the original outlay has twice exceeded the estimate, and partly because the neighbouring peasantry do

not as yet show sufficient eagerness in the production of the raw material, so that the work of the mill suffers frequent and somewhat long interruption. With a little courage and perseverance, however, a happy result may be confidently expected, and there is every reason to rely upon a sufficient return from the capital to promote the production of beetroot sugar throughout all these southern provinces, even if it be not found that the sugar-cane itself can be advantageously cultivated and boiled on the coasts of Puglia and Calabria. Already it is well known that the sugar-growers of Cuba can hardly rely on the labour of their slaves to enable them to withstand the competition of the French, German and other European beetroot growers. In Italy, in Sicily and Sardinia, besides the better quality of the root, the speculation might for a long time rely on cheaper labour. The best workmen in the Rieti factory are satisfied with 2 f. 50 c. (2*s.*) daily wages. It seems natural that an industry reckoning equally on the energies of the husbandman and of the manufacturer should recommend itself to these southern people, in preference to the paper, glass and iron works upon which newly-awakened speculation is somewhat rashly willing to venture.

The weather mended on the day after our arrival at Aquila, and we rose in the morning to enjoy a first view of its glorious site. I had been only three weeks before at Saltzburg, and I feared my vivid recollection of that unrivalled Alpine panorama

might dwarf by contrast any impression I might receive of this unique spot in the Apennines. As at Saltzburg the old palace of the Prince Bishop, so here the castle of which the Emperor Frederick II. laid the foundation commands the full extent of the surrounding mountain scenery. I was led to one of the towers of this massive imperial stronghold by Colonel B——, the officer in command of this district, married to an English lady, to whom I had brought letters from some of his friends at Rome. The weather had mended, as I said, and the transition from deep gloom to intense brightness was wrought before us with that swiftness which is not among the least wonders of an Italian atmosphere. With the morn the curtain rose, and the scene was at once revealed. There was a sprinkling of fresh-fallen snow on the mountain summits, pointing out at once the giants of the chain, and giving the rugged rocks and the still verdant woods of the hill-sides not a little of the majesty of an Alpine landscape. We were back again on the spot towards evening, and at a late hour that snow blushed in the rays of the setting sun with all the lovely evanescent tints which enrapture the beholder as from the terrace at Berne he gazes on the glory of the Oberland. Aquila rises on a little platform or table-land in the centre of a vast mountain shell, the horizon of which is limited by the huge masses of the Gran Sasso d' Italia, the Maiella, Monte Velino and other peaks, rising to a height of above 9,000

feet, and at a distance from the town of twenty to thirty miles, but so clustered round it as to shut out the view of the plain, and apparently of any valley or outlet leading to it. It is the most perfect mountain-fastness the Apennine can anywhere exhibit, and in that respect unlike any of the prospects which diversify at every step this heaven-petted Italian land.

From the view outside to an inspection of the town the disenchantment is rude. Aquila is a mere dunghill in the centre of a garden. Its dirt and filth have not even the excuse of antiquity, for the city only dates from the thirteenth century, which in Italy is simply yesterday, and it rose from the ground on a pre-conceived plan—a town not born, but made, with straight streets, broad squares, and on comparatively level ground. Away from the north and from the large towns, the habits of the Italians, at least of certain classes,—it is painful to have to confess it, but should be proclaimed from the house-tops,—give no sign of mending, and in this respect our people are the lowest in the European scale, the Turk or the Spaniard not excepted. Marino, Aricoia, Tivoli, and all the lovely villages in the immediate neighbourhood of Rome, or, for that matter, many of the Roman quarters themselves, ancient or modern, ruined or inhabited, are a scandal to Christianity; the bright-eyed, rosy cheeked and in many cases carefully washed and tidily dressed *Contadinas* wallow in a filth which

might shock not only any other Latin race, but the very Bedouin of the desert, and the negro on a sugar plantation. Yet between the Roman and the Neapolitan districts it would not be easy to decide where the palm of nastiness should be awarded; and certainly Aquila, and I am afraid all Abruzzo, seem determined not to be left behind in the inglorious competition. There are inns of some pretension in the Eagle city, the sickening sights and smells of which knock you down on your first entrance, and any hope of future improvement can hardly be entertained, as the fault lies less with the carelessness of the landlord than with the incorrigible habits of most of his guests. Look at the railway stations throughout Italy, or pass the street-corners of almost any city in the Peninsula, and you will see that in the strife between the clean and the unclean factions into which the population is divided, the latter, as the greater number, have invariably the upper hand. But if railways have done so little towards correcting the evil even in Lombardy or Tuscany, what must be the case with these districts away from the iron track? The land of these fertile southern provinces, like that of Spain, is never tilled, but merely scratched; the cultivation is as slovenly as that of Asia Minor, and crop after crop is wrested from the soil without the compensation of a single cartload of manure. This indifference of the country population to the interests of their fields supplies the townspeople with a good

excuse for the dirty state of their streets and houses. There is no demand for the commodity most abundant among them. There is nobody coming to remove the nuisance for love or money, and what else can they do but leave it to rot and fester where it lies, relying on the keenness of the air and the purity of the sky for protection against cholera, typhus, or any other scourge with which uncleanliness richly deserves to be visited.

"Ah! but," they say, "cleanliness is an expensive luxury, and the Municipal Corporation of Aquila is on the verge of bankruptcy." How the town manages its funds it might perhaps be interesting to inquire, but in the meanwhile that there is wealth enough, both public and private, in the town, is a fact which might be inferred from the truly magnificent theatre, which has just been finished this year at an outlay of one million of francs (40,000*l.*), and the stalls and boxes of which are seized upon for the season with an eagerness which allows even the wealthiest families only the enjoyment of the performance on alternate evenings. Money enough for the dancing-girls—whom an appreciating public went out a few days ago to meet on their arrival, paraded through the town with plaudit and acclamation, and the substitution of two-legged asses for the horses or mules detached from their carriage, *more Italico*,—and whom they feasted and toasted at a dingy *caffè*—but, alas! no money to sweep the streets, none to attend to the

drainage, none to keep up the pauper asylum, or *Ospizio di Mendicità*, to its full efficiency, and prevent the spreading of that loathsome sore of street beggary which, on the first removal of Bourbon rule, seemed to have been partially healed.

All this doubtless is the recoil of old Italy against the new order of things which the late political changes were intended to introduce; the theatre, the building of which has now at last been brought to a termination, was planned before 1860, and the old one, we are told, was "inadequate to the requirements of modern art." But it is painful to see what the people here call "the beautiful"—for the ballet is after all the *ne plus ultra* of Aquilan æsthetics—take precedence of common decency and of improvements of the first necessity. The leaven of old Italy is still at work here. You look in vain for a glimpse of intellectual or social activity. Not a book, not a newspaper, if we except the paltry, semi-weekly *Gazette* which Aquila, as the capital of an Italian province, the seat of a Court of Appeal, and a military command, is officially bound to publish. Aquila has 15,000 inhabitants and ninety-nine churches, yet there is not even religion enough to protect the fine Gothic façade of Sta. Maria di Collomaggio, or the monument of San Bernardino inside the church, from the Vandalism which has either knocked down statues from their niches or cruelly mutilated and disfigured them —all this, to say nothing of the defilement of

every corner of all sacred edifices, the result of inveterate habits from which the priests, when they were masters, never attempted to wean their rude flock.

It is irksome, and it may seem cruel, to dwell on these unsavoury particulars; but, I repeat, it is well that the Italians should hear from an honest, and most assuredly not hostile witness, how painful to a man fresh from other regions must be the sights and smells to which their own senses seem so perfectly blunted. Their press is apparently engrossed with subjects of too lofty a nature to allow it to attend to these minor matters, to din in the ear of their countrymen the great truth, that dirt, however "picturesque," is not beautiful—nay, that it lies at the bottom of whatever is physically and morally ugly.

It is not known how long Aquila may remain out of the railway track. A branch now in progress of construction is to join this town with Pescara on the great Adriatic line from Bologna to Ancona and Brindisi, and there are some schemes of continuing this branch from Aquila to Rieti and Terni, so as to place these provinces in communication with Rome and Florence. It seems natural to hope that even these Abruzzesi may be affected by the noise and smoke of the steam-engine, and that intercourse with other people may awaken them to a sense of their material interests, so as to promote the development of the ample resources which their

territory places within their reach. Besides the buried treasure which lies beneath their soil, would they only dig deep enough to unbury it, they possess almost unlimited mineral wealth. The marbles with which the walls of their churches are profusely adorned, specimens of *giallo* and *verde antico*, *Africano*, *cipollino*, &c., are mostly taken from quarries in the neighbouring mountains, the depth of which no one has for many years taken the trouble to explore; and you can scarcely travel along the high roads without being affected by the odour of sulphur lying on the earth's surface, and awaiting the "*Inglese*"—the fool ready to part with his money—who is to come some day and open an industry which may be no good to him, but will not fail to benefit the country and its people.

One perpetually hears the people here complain of the heavy taxes, which, they say, are the only "blessing" the new Liberal Government has brought upon them. A poor, honest, intelligent countryman was telling me that his family consists of twelve grown-up persons, all gifted with that fine healthy appetite which this keen mountain air is calculated to encourage, and that the mere Grist-tax for the flour used up by his household in a week amounts to the sum of two francs (1*s.* 8*d.*), or 4*l.* a year. This is certainly monstrous, and would be so even if no other burden lay on the land. But there is no doubt that the land would bear that and

much more if the people would only work enough to do justice to it. The climate of this elevated region is unsuited to the olive or orange, but the coolness and moisture would insure large crops of grain of every description, and the mountains would afford pasture to twice and three times the cattle that are now browsing on them. Such soil as one sees at a glance over the ploughed fields Providence has hardly bestowed on any other human race; but what does it all avail if the whole system of culture is deplorably backward, if fences and hedges are unknown, barns and other rural premises are falling to ruin, and the husbandman consents to starve rather than exert himself? The prices of almost everything, except tickets for the theatre—the lowest of which are thirty-five cents (or 3½*d.*)—have risen to three and four times the old charges; but, I am told, the workmen's wages are at the former low rate. They have not risen very considerably even in Lombardy or the other northern regions, but here they have made no advance at all. No artisan in the neighbourhood of Aquila can hope to earn more than two lire (1*s.* 3*d.*), and the labourer scarcely half that sum, which, if he has a family depending on his industry, will buy little more than their daily bread. Yet the poor endure and toil, and are deficient neither in good-will nor intelligence, as they prove when they are properly instructed, encouraged and guided. The fault, it would seem, lies in the

upper and middle classes. There are at Aquila scores of palaces, some of them sumptuous and stately. In one of them I visited a magnificent museum, many of the pictures and antiquities of which are yet unsold, though they have long been for sale. Noble families of very old descent reside in those mansions, exercising little or no hospitality, known for no deeds of beneficence, pinching and saving, idling and fooling away their time no one knows how. The Municipal Government can do nothing, not even endow the theatre, as its mere building exhausted all their funds. That theatre, I confess, is more than I can put up with—40,000*l.* spent in building and adorning a playhouse far more gorgeous than the Princess's or the Lyceum in London, and not one penny to relieve the wants of the suffering poor! And the *Monte di Pietà*, or Government pawnbroking establishment, had run out of its funds by the time the inauguration of the Opera season was announced!

Aquila is or could be made a delightful summer residence, and were there only proper accommodation, it could hardly fail to become a favourite resort of the well-to-do people of Rome, Naples and other large cities; but till at least the railway works wonders, no man would be so cruel as to recommend it for a residence to his worst enemy. We left at Aquila a person whom, on that account, I should have been delighted to take away with me, and that was the English wife of that Colonel B——

who, as I said, so kindly received us, and whose hospitality greatly contributed to soften the sinister impression that the squalor of the place made upon us. Madame B—— was young, handsome, accomplished, and had been married barely a twelvemonth. She belonged by birth to a good English family, and she had come with her parents to Italy, as so many English do, in love with the "Romantic South"; loath to quit the pure air, the genial climate, the indefinable glamour by which this happy Italian land bewitches foreign visitors, she listened to the proposal of Colonel B——, a gallant and highly-esteemed officer, whom she had frequently met at Rome and Florence, and they were united at the English chapel at Leghorn, the wedding being little less than an auspicious international event for a large circle of their friends and acquaintances.

The gentle Englishwoman could not have better bestowed her affections, but she little apprehended for what uncouth abode she had to give up the charms and refinements of her father's home. All she knew of Italy was the luxury of the hotels in the Lung' Arno or the Chiaia, or by way of a change, the tidy rooms at some little marine villa at Spezia, Ardenza, or Viareggio during the bathing-season. Of garrison life in a provincial city she had not the least idea, and far less could her imagination have conjured up such a God-forsaken, wretched hole as this sublime but dismal *catapecchia*

in the heart of the Neapolitan Apennine. Had she fallen among the Hottentots her surprise and consternation could scarcely have been greater. She complained very little however, and looked as cheerful as she could in the company of her husband, to whom she was sincerely attached and who deserved all her devotion, and in the presence of his brother officers, and of the few other visitors whom he, though by no means blind to the unsuitableness of the association, deemed it absolutely indispensable to admit.

It was only in her unguarded conversation, when, for the first time in the whole year, visitors — my companion and I—addressed her in her own language,—when she found herself in that English company, "of which," as she told us, "she had prophetically dreamt that very night,"—that her full heart overflowed, and the dreariness of that life, utterly destitute of its habitual social intercourse, revealed itself. She made the best of her situation, as a brave woman would. Her little *ménage* was admirably conducted. She called in her allies against the enemy, her daily genial pursuits. In her drawing-room and boudoir were books, a grand piano, a little easel—she had drawn those caged brigands in the dock, to which I have lately alluded, and painted them so admirably to the life, that woodcuts of them challenged admiration in the *Illustrated London News*—and all that infinity of pretty toys, nick-

nacks and things with which the ladies of her country under all circumstances know how to fill up existence.

The Colonel and his wife were all-in-all to each other, and found their happiness in concentrated affection. But Aquila was hard to digest nevertheless, and Colonel B—— was incessantly storming the War Office, where he had powerful interest, with requests for a change of quarters, and even talked of throwing up his commission. Mean time a pleasing arrangement was got up between us that both of them, if possible, but at all events Madame B——, should come for a little relaxation to spend the Christmas and Carnival season with us at Rome. I insisted to the best of my abilities that Madame should accompany us at once; but my wishes clashed with the hopes the wedded pair entertained of an auspicious event which they looked upon as imminent—an event which was to cheer their solitude, and enable them to bring one more with them, when, after two or three months, they should favour us with their company.

But, alas! the two or three months passed, and instead of Colonel and Madame B—— and their child, there came a black-edged envelope, and within it an appeal for the condolences of the Colonel's friends on the irreparable loss he had sustained in the person of his idolized wife. "The bough broke under the burden of the over-ripe fruit." Poor Madame B—— was for ever released from the *ennuis*

of her Aquilan residence. Orders for a change of quarters of her husband's regiment to Florence arrived soon afterwards — yet too late. The bereaved husband at once quitted Aquila, and went forth into the world in quest of such consolation as time, let us hope, could not fail to bring even to sorrow like his.

CHAPTER XIV.

DOWN FROM ABRUZZO.

From Aquila to Avezzano—The Road—The Inn—Rural Interiors—Ancient and Modern Roman Works—Torlonia and Lake Fucino—The King, the Prince, and the Guerrilla Chief—Garibaldi in Rome—The Tiber Canal.

AQUILA is said to be the highest city in Italy, but we had to go much higher, driving up hill for nearly five hours before we lost sight of it. Besides the road which brought us to it from Rome, by Terni and Rieti, there are two highways to the Adriatic, one through Teramo to Giulia Nova, and another through Popoli to Pescara; and there is, finally, a fourth route, the one we followed, which travels southward to Avezzano and Sora, on the way to Naples.

This road, which has been recently made carriageable, is called the *Strada dei Cerri*, because it winds along the skirts of Monte Velino, one of the Apennine giants, which was a few years ago all clad with a forest of oaks, only very few of which have escaped the greedy woodman's axe, and here and there, straggling and forlorn, dot the thin

pastures and bare mountain sides which have thus been brought into the light of day.

The ascent was weary and laborious, and the four small but spirited post-nags harnessed to our vehicle required all the arguments of a carter's whip to persuade them to creep up at the rate of two to three miles an hour. The service of the *corriere*, or mail-coaches, organized under Government auspices, is performed with creditable order and diligence, and exhibits one of the few symptoms of progress observable in these long-neglected southern provinces, the only fault to be found with it being the length of the stages, tasking the powers of the good and plucky but indifferently-fed cattle beyond the limits of all common humanity. The views of Aquila and its vast mountain amphitheatre, as we looked back upon them at every turning in those endless zigzags of the road, surpassed almost everything that recollection could conjure up, and the changes of sunset and cloud, of mist and rainbow, which played on the distant landscape, so enhanced its grandeur, that it was not without regret we saw its wide expanse rapidly waning in the early evening gloaming.

We had left Aquila at 1 P.M., and it was already night before we reached Rocca di Mezzo, the spot on the summit of the pass whence, by daylight, we might have descried a still grander prospect, looking over the valley of the Liris and the surface of what was once Lago Fucino. Three

hours later, at ten, we came to our night-quarters at Avezzano.

Our fellow-travellers and all the people here scout every apprehension of banditti encounters; and indeed nothing seems more marvellous than the profound security of the highways which the Italian Government has at last established in these districts, where only months ago few people dared to venture out unescorted by day or night five hundred yards beyond the gates of even so important a place as Aquila, the capital of a province. But, if free from the terrors of the road, the wayfarer has still to contend with the horrors of the inn; and if we had good reason to complain of Aquila, we found that we had only travelled further to fare infinitely worse by coming to Avezzano. We reached the latter town one hour behind our time, and found the place plunged into darkness and silence, as if the inhabitants had given us up as lost. About half-a-score of men, nevertheless—ragamuffins in woollen caps and tattered gabardines, shivering in the rain that streamed from their garments—gathered in solemn awe round the coach as it drew up at the post-house door; but something either in the vehicle or in the passengers must have struck them as uncanny, as no one offered to open the carriage-doors or help us to alight, and on our plainly inquiring about our hostelry, the *Moscatello*, they looked into each other's faces and scratched their heads, as if no inn had ever existed in the

place, or if what existed had been washed away in the flood. Some one out of that spell-bound group seemed at last to recover his senses, and he mustered sufficient courage to remove his cloak from his mouth, and, exclaiming with all the energy of heroic resolution, "*Moscatello? Son qua io*," he volunteered to be our guide. He led us, without lantern, through pitch-dark, slushy streets, where the ground beneath our feet was slimy and sticky, something like the bottom of a half-drained sewer. At last we stepped upon *terra firma* on the floor of the inn-kitchen, and asked for a night's *gîte*. I and my fellow-traveller have no horror of chumming together at a pinch; so, seeing the blank, puzzled looks and hearing the anxious consultation to which our simple application had given rise between the landlord, his wife and family, and his staff, we hastened to re-assure them by declaring our indifference as to whether they gave us one room or two.

"That is just my embarrassment," quoth the landlord, "because we have only three rooms." We overruled that difficulty by offering to pay for them all; but here the cat was let out of the bag, for we found out at last that the real obstacle arose from the fact that the rooms in question were not in the inn itself, but in a *succursale*, or outbuilding, to which it was necessary to convey, in the pelting rain, not only ourselves and our chattels, but also pillows, blankets and a variety of other night-

furniture. However, after a scanty, improvised supper on eggs and bacon, thither we managed to betake ourselves, through the slush, in a heavy downpour, and by the light of a farthing candle held before us by a slipshod wench, who suffered it to go out three times during the *trajet* of about one hundred yards, and had each time to strike a score of matches before, under shelter of our cloaks and umbrellas, she had relighted it. On entering the rooms, dark and dingy, followed by the long procession with their bundles dripping with the rain, it was found that "the key of the linen-press had been mislaid, Heaven knows where"; and we had to choose between our own wet cloaks and wrappers, and such sheets, pillow-cases and towels as had done duty we knew not for how many former tenants of the apartments. This inheritance of left-off goods seems to have nothing repugnant to the natives of these southern provinces, among whom a community of combs, tooth and hair-brushes has long been established, those useful implements lying upon almost every bed-room table, as the Bible does on the chest of drawers of every temperance hotel in Lancashire, or New England. At Pescara, nine years ago, when I was at the opening of the railway from Ancona, I found this amiable brotherhood carried still further, for upon my allowing myself some remarks about the greyness of the water in my basin, the landlady coolly assured me that the water was "all right," as it

had been drawn that very morning, and "had only served for three other travellers, all gentlemen from Barletta."

In the morning, as we looked out of our window, and the day threw a new light upon the untold filth around us, it robbed us of the desperate courage with which we had plunged into thick and thin on the previous night. What sights along that dreary thoroughfare! What prospects up those dismal side streets! What an incessant shower of pailfuls of foul water thrown from the windows upon that pavement where the pig "was still the Lord of All!" Could this be Avezzano, an Italian, a Christian town?

We looked at the doors of the big, two-storied houses on the opposite side of the main street, whence men, wrapped in cloaks, and with lighted clay-pipes, tramped out and were soon lost in the thick fog which clung to the ground with a tenacity promising well for the fulfilment of the local saying, that "*Nebbia bassa buon' tempo lassa.*" We looked at the windows of the same tenements, where the wives and the children owned by the same men began to show at the various stages of their morning toilet; and we dwelt with particular interest upon a *vis-à-vis*, where we saw a group of some fifteen or sixteen of the small fry of the same household huddled together before the casement, unkempt wenches and shock-headed urchins, many of them stark-naked, on a progressive scale of height, like

the barrels of an organ, swarming like snakes in a hole, and clambering upon one another, to have a peep at the strangers in the inn. That interior presented a scene for Murillo. The mother sat in the midst of the group, somewhat away from the window, and snatched up now one and now another of the urchins, and went to work single-handed, or with the help of the elder girls, forcing those struggling limbs into their little tight, shrunken frocks, and labouring to tame the thick elfin locks of those dusky heads which, after a cursory yet minute inspection, she parted and wetted and smoothed down with the palms of her hands. The matron-like comeliness of the woman and the healthy look of her progeny—if indeed all or any of them call her mother—enhanced the squalor of that wretched apartment which scarcely allowed them elbow-room. Presently the young ones, as they issued from the parental hands one by one, found their way out at the street door, and the whole lot were soon at their gambols in the gutter, exchanging morning greetings with their friend and playmate, the pig.

Things mended a little as the day advanced. There is nothing more good-natured or good-humoured, nothing handsomer or stronger, than these descendants of the ancient Samnite. The people at the inn, as they recovered from their unaccountable consternation at our apparently unexpected arrival, became unremitting in their attentions; and some letters of introduction we brought

with us sent us charming friends, who took us to their houses and hearts, and spared no pains to make us at home at Avezzano. The town itself, upon a more intimate acquaintance, proved not to be so very nasty a hole as it appeared at first sight. Our inn evidently lay in the most objectionable locality; some of the old quarters, and a large market-place, though sadly neglected by the municipality, were not much worse than the worst we had seen at Aquila. There were not only persons of high rank, but of education and refinement, residing in the place, though how even the fact that their landed estates lay in the neighbourhood could reconcile them to such a sojourn, altogether passed our understanding.

My object in going through Avezzano however was not to study the contrast between the lights and shades of the town, but to inspect the works by which Prince Torlonia has converted what was once a marsh, forty-two miles in circumference, called lake Fucino, or Di Celano, into a fertile rural district intended to support and accommodate 2,000 or 3,000 labourers. It is an enterprise in which Imperial Rome, in the palmy days of her power, had at first failed, and at last only partially succeeded, while the neglect of after ages had almost entirely obliterated every trace of her achievements. The lake was an inconvenient neighbour to the province, as the ebb and flow of its level exposed them to inundations, and wrought frequent havoc and fever

to the surrounding villages. Cæsar, we are told, and after him Claudius and Nero, bethought themselves of a remedy to the evil by opening an outlet, or emissary, which should discharge the waters of the lake into the Liris, the bed of which was about eighty feet below the bottom of the lake. The intention of the Romans was, however, not to drain the lake, but simply to keep it to a constant level, reducing it to about one-third of its original extent. The work of the Cæsars was not properly executed, nor was it thoroughly mended or repaired by the exertions of the later Emperors who took it in hand. The Middle Ages found the old Roman channel already choked up, and the efforts of the Emperor Frederick II., the creative spirit of this region, to re-open it were unavailing. It was this task, to which so many great sovereigns had proved unequal and on which the resources of large slave-owning communities had been exhausted, that a private man, Don Alessandro Torlonia, took upon himself, and he determined to do away with the lake altogether. He bought off a company which had obtained a grant of the lake for the same purpose in 1852, but which failed in its attempt, and, with the aid of English, French, Swiss as well as native Italian engineers, he went to work in good earnest, in 1858. He expected at first the work could be achieved at an outlay of one million Roman crowns (200,000*l.*); but he soon found out that it would exceed twice that sum—indeed, it is

said to have risen to more than 1,000,000*l.*; and in spite of the Prince's well-known enormous wealth the peasant of the environs sneeringly doubted "whether Torlonia would drain the lake, or the lake drain Torlonia."

His success was however splendid. He re-opened and greatly widened the old Roman channel, and made it four miles in length, and about twenty-one yards in width. Through this channel an extent of 36,000 acres of the lake were drained by the time we were there, and the whole ground, it was said, would be laid bare and brought into cultivation before the ensuing spring.

We drove up to see this stupendous work early in the morning, as the thick autumn mist broke before the rays of a sickly sun, giving, in spite of the above quoted popular proverb, a very faint hope of a fine day. The fog broke up for a few minutes as our gig went through the few miles of alluvial soil lying between the town and the emissary, and we were barely allowed to step up to its banks and listen to the roar of the rushing waters, when the clouds again closed over us, and presently the darkness dissolved itself into heavy moisture. It was but little that we could see, and we had not proceeded far when the rain forced us to a retreat. We only made as long a halt as we could on the spot where a huge lock moderates the outflow of the water, and where a monumental building in white Travertine was then already rising, to be dedicated,

it is said, to the Immaculate Conception, but on a central monolith of which is an inscription intended to send down to posterity the date of the achievement, and the name of its princely promoter. The ground rescued from the lake has already been cut out into large squares, intersected by magnificent roads, along which are to rise 400 peasant dwellings, with twenty-four chapels and two convents. These buildings, and the barns, sheds and other premises necessary for cultivation on the largest scale, will be raised at a cost of 160,000*l*. The whole estate of 15,000 hectares will be organized as a monstér model farm, to be colonized by labourers from the various estates of the Prince. Large tracts of the ground reclaimed are already yielding crops at a profit of 30 to 36 per cent., and owing to the richness of the alluvial soil, will continue to do so for three years without manure, while the upper slopes of the lake-bed are mantled over with young low vineyards, the produce of which can hardly fail to be of the best quality.

Notwithstanding the immense advantages accruing to the neighbourhood by this glorious enterprise, which has given employment to 30,000 workmen for sixteen years, the name of Prince Torlonia appeared at the time to enjoy no great popularity on the spot. The people of Avezzano, who had sneered at the work so long as its success appeared to them uncertain, and the probable profits inadequate, were now raising a complaint

that the exhalations from the newly-made land have caused fevers in a district which, they said, was formerly free from them; but could the epidemic even be traced to this cause, it would necessarily be of a transient nature, as well-drained and cultivated ground must prove in the end more healthful than the ever-shifting surface of a reedy marsh. The truth is that fever reigned round the spot throughout the countless centuries in which the Fucino was a lake, and that, whatever may be the case at present, there is good hope that the scourge may hereafter be entirely removed. But were even justice to the Prince denied by the neighbourhood or by the present generation, he has every reason to flatter himself that his name will go down to posterity as that of the performer of a heroic deed, and of a liberal benefactor to his race. That the profit arising from his venture is likely far to exceed his most sanguine expectations, can in no way detract from the lasting fame to which he is most justly entitled.

My visit to Avezzano took place on the 3rd of November, 1873. Rather more than fourteen months later, January 28th, 1875, something unexpected occurred in Rome. On that day, at eight o'clock in the morning, His Excellency Prince Don Alessandro Torlonia drove up in his grand family coach to the Palace of the Quirinal, where His Majesty, the King of Italy, was prepared to receive him; two days later, the ensuing Saturday, at the same early

hour, the King conferred the same honour on General Garibaldi. The world was interested to know by what strange chain of circumstances these three distinguished personages were now brought together, and why their meeting was hailed by the Italians as a particularly auspicious event. Victor Emmanuel, by the Grace of God King of Italy, and by the will of his people usurper of the Papal States, and invader of the Pontifical Palaces; Don Alessandro Torlonia, a Prince of the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church, and a personal friend of Pius IX.; finally Garibaldi, the uncompromising Republican, and implacable enemy of the priests—these three had seen and spoken to one another, and a good understanding, mutual esteem, and a common object henceforth united them.

Hardly any of the English tourists resorting to Rome in former years need be told who is Don Alessandro Torlonia, the head of a great banking establishment, whose hospitalities rivalled those of the most conspicuous princely houses, and constituted one of the main attractions of the Roman season. The millionaire banker, whose father, or grandfather, was an immigrant here from Northern Italy, and who had on the slenderest foundation laid the colossal fortune of his family, after achieving greatness for himself, and having more greatness thrust upon him by matrimonial alliances with the Colonna, the Borghese, the Chigi, Albani, and other magnate houses, had lately, it was understood,

in an advanced but still vigorous age, to some extent withdrawn from social intercourse, and was absorbed by a grand, glorious, and profitable undertaking—the draining of lake Fucino. The task was by this time thoroughly accomplished, and in the autumn of 1874 the work was visited and carefully inspected by Silvio Spaventa, the Minister of Public Works, himself an Abruzzese and one of the ablest and most energetic members of the King's Cabinet, who was then on a visit to his native province. Spaventa came back strongly impressed with admiration for the genius and daring which had suggested the enterprise, and for the heroic perseverance which had executed it, and proposed in the King's Council that a token of the gratitude of the Government and people of Italy should be tendered to the patriotic Prince. A gold medal was therefore struck in Torlonia's honour, and in remembrance of the completion of his undertaking, and it was for the purpose of thanking the King, through the hands of whose first aide-de-camp this distinction was conveyed to him, that the Prince waited on His Majesty on the above-mentioned day.

It was with no friendly feeling to the King, or his Government, that in these latter days Garibaldi undertook his long meditated and often postponed journey to Rome. He had shown some weariness of his lonely residence at Caprera; a cry had been raised in his name; his pecuniary distress, or, indeed, absolute destitution, had been made the

theme of angry comments; he had been returned to Parliament by several electoral colleges, and first and foremost by one of the Roman constituencies, and was expected to come hither as a leader of the extreme Opposition, a champion of those ultra-democratic and anti-clerical principles of which in his letters and speeches, as well as in his weightier publications, he had made himself an expounder. Great was the expectation of the mischief-makers, and greater still the consternation of the friends of order, at the announcement of Garibaldi's approach. It was known that he would take his seat in the Chamber as Deputy, and the expectation was, that as he was called upon to swear allegiance to the King and Constitution, he would either refuse to take the oath, or, like Felice Cavallotti, declare that "He looked upon the oath as a mere farce, of no value, and in no way binding upon him."

We all know what the result was: Balaam had come to curse and he stayed to bless. Garibaldi, worn with years, wounds and infirmities, crippled by gout and rheumatism, his hands drawn up like claws, his noble lion face dried up to a mummy, stood up in his place, leaning on his friends, Macchi and Cairoli, and, upon the oath being administered, pronounced his *Giuro* with an emphasis and a dignity which electrified the whole House and awakened a thunder of applause, effacing in one moment the misgivings and prejudices to which his conduct for these last few years had given rise.

Garibaldi was again, in the estimation of his countrymen, the same self-denying hero who, in 1860, resigned into the King's hands the government of the southern kingdoms which he had "redeemed with his blood for Italy and Victor Emmanuel," and embarked, poor and lonely, without any title, honour, or distinction, for his barren rock of Caprera. The truth is, the world refuses to recognize in Garibaldi the man he really is—the most unselfish and generous of beings, animated by the noblest intentions, and urged by a restless longing for action, swayed by sudden and strong impulses, and yielding to untoward suggestions, almost always out in his reckonings and reasonings, but in the end mistrusting his own judgment, and leaning for support and direction upon any adviser who may happen to be immediately at hand. I need not go back to the glorious yet sorrowful days of 1860-1, when Garibaldi was rash enough to appear in the House of Deputies at Turin, crossing swords with such a formidable fencer as Cavour, and exposing himself to the castigation of so unsparing an adversary as Cialdini. Nor is it necessary for me to refer to the hare-brained expeditions which brought upon Garibaldi the disasters of Aspromonte and Mentana, or to the Quixotic instinct which led to his melo-dramatic crusade in behalf of the French Republic. Let any man propose anything "impossible" to Garibaldi, and he will attempt it. Propound to him any

social theory utterly unintelligible and nonsensical, and he makes himself its advocate. But on the other hand talk reason to Garibaldi, make him aware of the error of his ways, appeal to his better nature, and you have your lion tamed, the most gentle and forgiving, docile, and, what is more, sensible creature in the world.

The good star of Garibaldi caused him, on his arrival in Rome, to fall into the hands of fair and true friends, who were to him what the ass was to Balaam. Macchi, Cairoli and others, although members of the extreme Opposition, and perhaps at heart Republicans, are above all things patriots; they felt that neither the welfare of Italy nor the interests of any party could be advanced at this moment by division or popular disturbance, and they had no difficulty in bringing Garibaldi over to their views. He swore fealty to the Monarchy, and renounced, *pro tanto*, his crude and ill-defined Republican predilections. Having sworn himself into the Chamber, he easily persuaded himself that his mission there was at an end; that a Parliament was not the field on which he was particularly suited to shine, and that the peculiar bent of his mind was for more practical and substantial things than political speculation. A new scheme was either conceived by or suggested to him, and in his eagerness to pursue it he declared that he would not go back to Caprera, and was looking out for a residence in or near Rome, where he would dedicate

himself, heart and soul, to the welfare of the city and its territory, and co-operate for that purpose with any good and true man who would join him, irrespectively of any difference of religious or political opinions.

Thus did the meeting of the strangely assorted triumvirate of King, Prince and Guerrilla Chief, come to pass. Garibaldi's original scheme consisted of a *sistemazione*, as they call it, of the Tiber, to be effected by means of a canal about thirty kilomètres in length, and 100 mètres wide, in emulation of the Suez Canal, from some spot above Rome, at Ponte Molle, to the Port of Fiumicino, near Ostia. By this canal, which was to be navigable, the city would become, to all practical effects, a sea-port, and it would be safe from floods; the level of the country along the banks of the river would be raised by the earth dug out of the canal; the land would be thoroughly drained, laid out for cultivation, and colonized by an agricultural and seafaring population. To meet the first expenses attendant upon such an enterprise, Garibaldi proposed to devote a sum of twenty millions of lire (about 800,000*l.*), which the Minister of War, Ricotti, wished to employ in works of fortification round the capital; and there is no doubt that Garibaldi's motion to that effect, as it tended to guard Rome against enemies more formidable than any fancied foreign invader—the floods and the malaria—was sure of the support of a large party in the Chamber of Deputies, both

of the Right and Left; for, in fact, the Minister's scheme of an entrenched camp near Rome had met with little favour, and on the other hand it was felt that to regulate and embank the Tiber was a question of pressing interest, and had been too long neglected and postponed both by the Government and by the various commissions appointed to inquire into it. But, besides any favourable vote that his name and his energy may secure in the Italian Parliament, Garibaldi relied on the ascendency his character and his services might exercise on the whole nation, and especially on the wealthy people of the capital. With that view, it seems, he addressed himself by letter to Prince Torlonia, congratulating him on the success of his great work of Lake Fucino, and expressing a hope to have him as an auxiliary in his scheme of a canal of the Tiber, especially as the Prince had already before him the surveys of a railway between Rome and Fiumicino, and the draining of large marshes near Ostia, all achievements which could easily be made to proceed hand in hand with Garibaldi's own projected undertaking. Full of his plans, and feverish with eagerness to go to work, Garibaldi bethought himself also of applying to the King for his patronage. Upon the first announcement of Garibaldi's intended visit to Rome, his old friends of the Lombard and Sicilian campaigns, Medici, Cosenz, Dezza, and other generals met there, and prepared to give him a warm and hearty welcome, in which they

were joined by General Türr, who came for the purpose all the way from Hungary, where he is now at home after a long exile, and where, I am told, he is engaged in some hydraulic enterprise analogous to the one which has taken Garibaldi's fancy. It so happens that General Medici, a Garibaldian veteran, is first aide-de-camp to the King, and although he only waited on his former chief in his private capacity, he found it easy to press upon him the propriety and expediency of his paying his respects to the sovereign, and the result of these "officious" negotiations was the interview to which I referred.

Garibaldi was taken to the Quirinal in a modest private carriage, accompanied by his son Menotti and by General Medici; the latter introduced and left him alone with the King. The interview lasted for half-an-hour. At its end, the old hero came out on his crutches, walking firmly, and refusing his son's aid as he came down stairs, observing "he could manage very well by himself."

Notwithstanding the importance, and indeed the necessity, of attending to the work shadowed forth by Garibaldi's scheme, it is perhaps little that either the General himself, or the King, or even Prince Torlonia, with all his wealth, can achieve towards its advancement. Not long after my return from Avezzano, I had the honour of an interview with Prince Torlonia in Rome, and was

satisfied that I stood in the presence of a man whose intelligence was, to say the least, as fresh and robust as the upright and active frame upon which seventy-four years of hard work seemed hardly to have made any impression. Still the years are there, and the Prince, however strong, may perhaps consider himself too old to dive very deeply into any new scheme, least of all into a scheme which it would probably take some score of years to realize. Again, Italian financiers have run the full length of their tether. They are hard up for the means of squaring their present accounts, and have bound themselves and their Parliament to a policy which discountenances any new outlays for which the funds are not obviously and readily forthcoming. No one can be surprised therefore if upon the Bill for the *sistematization* of the Tiber coming on for discussion in the Chamber towards the close of this last session, the Deputies almost unanimously voted the grant, but made the execution of the works conditional upon the possibility of the money being forthcoming; and meanwhile referred Garibaldi's modified and greatly restricted plan to the examination of a technical commission.

There is nothing more melancholy in this newly-constituted, and, on the whole, thriving and progressive Italian kingdom than the fact, that on this, the fifth year of the occupation of Rome, anything connected with the embankment of the Tiber, and the drainage of the Campagna, should not have

gone beyond the limits of a mere project. "To what extent," people say, "have the new rulers shown in this respect greater capacity, or more good-will, than the priestly Government whom they superseded, and against whom Italian patriotism allowed itself such violent and incessant invectives?"

CHAPTER XV.

TERRA DI LAVORO.

From Avezzano to Sora—A Stormy Journey—Pleasant Quarters—An Interior—A Character—Campanian Industry—Monte Cassino—A Priest-ridden, Foul-mouthed Population.

It is a hopeless case. A pleasure trip in the South Italian provinces during the autumnal rains is as impracticable an undertaking as a retreat from Russia upon the setting in of an early winter. We have not reached our journey's end yet, but we have already gone through some of the horrors of Krasnow, and we are not quite sure that the disasters of the Beresina are not in store for us.

We left Avezzano at nine in the evening of Wednesday, and arrived at Sora in the Terra di Lavoro, or Campania, at three o'clock in the ensuing morning. We had reasons of our own to wish to be here on Thursday, because it is market-day, and we were told the variety of costumes of the peasantry flocking to the place on such an occasion would afford us a gay and picturesque scene. We therefore travelled by the night mail-coach, the only public conveyance plying between the two towns; renouncing thus such pleasure as we had antici-

pated from a view of the valley of the Liris, as our friends at Avezzano had assured us that a private carriage would, in such weather as we might look forward to, hardly have any chance of pulling through.

We were however destined to be disappointed in every respect; for we did actually see a good deal of the valley, though it was not by the pale moonlight, but by the glare of incessant lightning. Rain and thunder storm had scourged, without thoroughly washing, Avezzano throughout that unfortunate Wednesday; rain and thunder storm went on with scarcely a minute's interval all the night between Wednesday and Thursday, the whole of Thursday, the whole of the following night, and again for another day and night, the clouds clinging to the hills, and no respite granted as the morning of Sunday breaks now upon us.

There was something sublime in the war of the elements which accompanied us on our way hither; something phenomenal in all that fire contriving to live through, and almost to feed upon all that deluge of water. The diligence which conveyed us streamed with the flood as if it had waded through it; and our four struggling post-horses, blinded and scared by the vivid flashes, plunged wildly on the verge of ravines and embankments, heedless of the voice of their equally bewildered and maddened driver, while the thunder rolled and crashed above us, peal on peal, audible through all

the noise of jingling bells and rattling wheels, above the rush of the foaming streams dashing across the road, and above the jangling of the church-bells, tolled from every steeple of the villages on the road-side.

Amidst all that din we accomplished our journey in perfect ease and safety, none of our fellow travellers evincing the least nervousness, though we were six in the interior of a tight mail-coach "constructed to carry only four," two of the stronger and as many of the gentler sex; but one of these latter was a mother burdened with an infant and perplexed with the care of a live turkey, "which," she anxiously informed us, when the bird broke loose from the thick petticoats under which she had managed to secrete it, "she had received as a present from a friend, and she had been loath to wring its neck, fearing it would not keep till Sunday." Had any of us, lulled by the music of the storm, felt any disposition to doze, the alternate crowing and whining, sparring and kicking of the savage, sleepless urchin, and the pecking of the worse than half-starved fowl at our heels and calves, would have been sufficient to keep all our faculties on the stretch, and our nerves would have been further aroused by the shrill dispute between the owner of the *gallinaccio* and the other female wayfarer in our compartment, upon whom the bird bestowed its attentions with an assiduousness to which the lady strongly, but, alas! vainly, objected. The angry remonstrances

and sharp repartees of that inharmonious contralto and soprano duet came on strangely in all that combination of concert, fireworks and *grandes eaux* to which the elements treated us, and which far surpassed all that Sydenham or Versailles ever exhibited.

The haven that awaited us at Sora, in the Albergo del Liri, made amends for any discomforts attendant on that intensely poetical, but wet journey. There are men peculiarly constituted who take pleasure in keeping an inn, even as an amateur does in playing on the flute. Such a *dilettante* was Don Matteo, the landlord of the Liri, and he has, we are told, a worthy rival in Don Taddeo, the proprietor of the Albergo di Roma. Both of them have proportioned their establishments, not to the wants of Sora and its market visitors, but to their own fortunes, which, in their own and their townsmen's conceit, are quite colossal. A Campanian, or indeed any Italian peasant, when cumbered with too much money is sure to build a house too large for himself, and to stock it with provisions beyond his own power of consumption. Anybody who will fill his empty rooms, and lessen his wasting store, and who besides will have a chat with him, bring him fresh news, and praise everything that is his, confers an honour which his entertainer will not fail to consider in the bill. He has only to be a guest and a friend rather than a customer to find in his *oste* a

hospes and not a *hostis*, Italy being after all the last country in the world in which a traveller is made to pay for bare civility.

The consequence of this disposition of many Italian inn-keepers, and the peculiar circumstance of the competition between the two inns at Sora, was that at the Liri, where our arrival was expected, we found a large suite of apartments prepared for our reception, with blazing fires, a well-spread board, luxurious beds, and a more obsequious attendance than any Prince in the 'Almanach de Gotha' could be entitled to. The contrast of all these splendours with the horrors we had left behind at Avezzano and Aquila, gave us an idea of the well-being and civilization of Sora which was not altogether borne out by a more intimate acquaintance with the town. We had crossed at Civitella del Roveto the boundary line between the Abruzzo and the Terra di Lavoro, and we expected to find in this latter province, the ancient "Campania Felix," a promised land flowing with milk and honey. The soil is, indeed, exceedingly fruitful, and its owners reap very great wealth from it; but Sora is not well paved or swept for all that, and the people were, as we arrived, vainly striving to barricade their houses and shops against the flood with which their river periodically visits, and now threatened them, while the stones of the embankment which was being reared for their protection lay piled up in the mud, the work

which the improvident Municipality carried on at a distressingly slow rate, being yesterday brought to a standstill by the storm.

It was but little that the rain and the dense clouds allowed us to see either of Sora and its famous motley market, or of its fertile plains and hills, and the deep ravines which encompass it. The draggled costume of the few *Ciocciari* and *Ciocciare*—rambling *vari nantes* about the drenched market-place—was no very gay sight, nor new for persons familiar with the steps of the Trinità dei Monti at Rome, or with the Largo di Castello at Naples; and the news that coaches due at two o'clock in the morning had only arrived after ten, while it gave little promise of a better attendance of market people in the afternoon, inspired us with serious uneasiness as to our own chances of progress or regress.

Fallen from our hopes of seeing Arpino and other classical localities in the neighbourhood, we had to make our best of Sora; and our landlord, not satisfied with the attentions himself bestowed upon us, proposed to introduce us to some of his conspicuous fellow citizens, the C——, *compari*, or gossips of his, relations of his own or of his wife, and millionaires like himself, who kept a shop in the main square, and carried on a wholesale trade in lamb and kid skins, ready at the same time for any other imaginable branch of business. More hearty, more single-minded, and at the same time

more shrewd and intelligent, though quaint and primitive people than this same family of the C—— we could not have fallen in with: Donna Betta, a portly, well-featured, good-humoured dame, yet in her middle-age bloom, seated on a bundle of her skins behind her counter, rose as we vaulted over the planks which barred out the water from the shop. She took our hands in hers, both hands of each of us, in turns, and shook them again and again lustily. She then showed us upstairs, calling out at every step, as she panted for breath, for her daughter Rosetta, for her cook and scullery maid, and the whole household, telling them of the god-send which had been vouchsafed to them in the persons of Compare Matteo's worthy friends, chiding us for not having at once alighted at her door instead of going to the inn, "as persons of any sense," she said, "would have done," declaring she would not allow us to quit her "for a month," for "a fortnight," for at last "as long as might be our stay in Sora"; and in the mean time booking us for dinner or supper the same evening, and in the same breath liberally acquainting us with all her private affairs, assuring us that they were very well off, that they had "*roba assai, danari assai*," and that we were welcome to any share of the "*Grazia di Dio*" wherewith they were blessed. Presently her pretty, dark-eyed, mere child of a Rosetta, fourteen years of age, tripped in, somewhat dishevelled, and blushing rosy red, her petticoats of such a

flimsy texture that, like gauze, they revealed the outline of her tender limbs; and not long after the dame's husband, Don Pasquale, made his appearance with his son Roberto, and the family was thus all before us. Don Pasquale, a rich widower, had fallen in with Donna Betta, a richer widow, and Roberto was "his'n," and Rosetta "her'n," and there were no "our'n"; and, as we were given to understand, the two young people were soon to be bidden to be man and wife, and come in for all the parents owned—a destiny the prospect of which had nothing repugnant to the youthful pair. Both the males of the family were stalwart and good looking, the father dignified, though somewhat ponderous, shy and rustic; the son more self-possessed and ready with his tongue, for he had seen the world in the capacity of his father's commercial agent, and knew the ways of other countries, though he only spoke his own dialect; and he had an eye to the main chance, and evidently aspired to give his father's business a larger scope, and to raise the firm of C—— and Son a few degrees in the trading scale.

A pleasant evening was spent with this unaffectedly cordial and hospitable Campanian family. They fed us with profusion, pressed rich viands and exquisite wines upon us with well-meant but old-fashioned insistence, and, after dessert, they produced for our admiration little treasures of the girl's school-samplers and worsted works, wax-

flowers, &c., which seemed little in keeping with the vast palatial though plain apartment, and lavish culinary expenditure.

Wealthy families in that rank of life have often nondescript retainers, such as were to be seen in former times in noble mansions; in and out door dependents living at the rich man's cost—the parish priest, or some of the lay brethren from a neighbouring convent; in some instances, the doctor coming in with fresh intelligence from that great news-mart of petty provincial communities, the apothecary shop—all individuals sure of their daily knife and fork at the bountiful board—but, more frequently, the house entertains a parasite, half-factotum, half-buffoon, of its own — a man who attaches himself to the place like a yard-dog, and is of no more account, yet who cannot be dispensed with and without whom nothing is done.

The "amico di casa," in this instance, was Don Gervaso, as he was called, who had been a novice in a Capuchin convent at an early period of his life, and had contrived to get himself ejected from the community to which he had at first endeared himself by his rich tenor voice, but which in the end he had plagued out of all patience by his Flibbertigibbet tricks. With a narrative of some of these he entertained us that evening over our roast chestnuts and wine till a late hour, telling his tale with a *gusto*, with a variety of lazzaroni gestures, *lazzi*, and antics, which convulsed with laughter, not only

us who heard him for the first time, but also the worthy family to whom those *picaresque* adventures were as old as the *lagrima Christi* in their cob-webbed demijohns: how being young and uncommonly pretty *(bello, bello, ma bellino davvero)*, and very popular on account of his voice, and of his skill in the manufactory of briefs and scapularies, he was petted by certain nuns to whose convent he accompanied the Father Precentor, and one day received from them the present of a large dainty almond cake: how, on his return to his cell, he put the cake into his drawer, reserving it as a *bonne-bouche* for many a morning; but on opening the drawer on the morrow, he discovered that the cake had made itself wings, and he could be at no loss to guess by whose hand the trick had been played upon him: how he laid his own plan, taking no man's counsel. He waited till the hour for matins came, and by pleading an imaginary attack of stomach-ache—you should have seen the grimaces with which the rascal rehearsed the whole scene, holding his sides with both hands, and groaning as if his heart would break—he obtained exemption from duty in the choir, and permission to lie abed; when, the brotherhood having all gone and left him alone, he crept out of his cell and stole up to the Precentor's chamber, where, sure enough, in the Precentor's desk, he found his own cake, robbed the thief, and made away with the prey, and devoured it all with such greed and haste that it brought

on indigestion in good earnest, and the very ailment which he had so adroitly counterfeited, and which confined him to his bed for a whole week with a gastric fever whereof the doctor could not interpret the symptoms, and of which neither the patient himself nor the Precentor ever revealed the cause.

It was under the guidance of this droll domestic we tried to kill the lions of the place. Don Matteo of the inn, and Don Pasquale of the lamb and kid skin shop, had each placed his carriage at our disposal, and a glimpse of sunshine, though trusted neither by ourselves nor by the people about us, tempted us to break bounds, and we ventured on a three miles' drive to Isola, the most important manufacturing place in the district; and we actually travelled there and back—myself, my companion, the sprightly Rosetta, and the wag of the family, Don Gervaso, who, we found, could be serious when required and talk sense, and who exhibited a knowledge of men and things which he could scarcely have acquired in the cloister. We travelled to Isola and back, I was saying, without accident, though we had to wade up to our axle-tree through the flood, which made a lake of the road and of the fields for many a mile to the right and left of it.

The neighbourhood of Sora, and especially the Isola di San Paolo, formed by the Liris at its confluence with the Fibreno, has long been known for its paper-mills and woollen cloth manufactories,

depending for their development on the unfailing water-power of this fresh and moist region. There are seven paper-mills, all thriving, and the one we visited, the *Cartiera del Fibreno*, has been of late years growing considerably in importance. Its founder and owner is a Frenchman, M. Lefevre, on whom the Bourbon King of the Two Sicilies, Bomba, bestowed patents of nobility, and the title of Count of Balzorano. The mill produces now about 150 cwt. of paper of various kinds daily, and employs more than 500 hands. The other mills, though not perhaps commanding the same ample resources, are equally active, and it is reckoned that as many as 3,000 persons are here engaged in the paper trade. Paper is made here and in other parts of Italy, of every kind and of the best quality, and in a quantity sufficient not only for home consumption, but also for a large exportation to Greece, Egypt and the Levant, and the North African Regencies; while a considerable deal of the paper which is sold as French or English in the larger Italian cities is, in spite of the trade-mark of "Bath" or "Angoulême," the produce of these and other national factories. The abundance of rags in this beggar-haunted country enables these paper-makers to compete with foreign manufacturers with a success which ought to be encouraging.

The cloth manufactories are not, apparently, in the same flourishing condition, and two of them,

we were told, have lately discontinued work. The one we visited at Isola is the property of Signor Polsinelli, a Member of the Italian House of Deputies, now in his ninetieth year, but still hale and strong enough to attend both to public and private business, and to take all the management of his establishment upon himself, dispensing with the aid of his son, who spends his time as is usual with the generation whose fortune is made.

The cloth of every description which we were shown seemed to be of excellent quality, and we admired especially several specimens of well-imitated Scotch plaid, and of the best broad-cloth. Though Polsinelli bravely holds his head above water and has accumulated considerable wealth, he looks with despondency on the future of the woollen industry in his country, owing to a variety of causes, ancient and recent, but especially to the high prices of stuffs, dies and other raw materials, which Italy must import at a tremendous loss, in consequence of the depreciation of her paper currency. Like many other half-successful manufacturers, Polsinelli is, as he has always been, a Protectionist; and at various junctures he vainly endeavoured to win the Turin Chamber over to his views, holding his own bravely and somewhat testily, even in frequent discussions with Count Cavour. That it is possible for a man in Polsinelli's business to flourish in Italy under a Free Trade policy, his own example furnishes the most con-

vincing proof; and still more satisfactory evidence is supplied by the mills of Biella in Piedmont, and by those of Schio in the Venetian territory. Still it seems natural to think that the Italians should turn their attention rather to those branches of industry, the materials of which are the natural production of their own country; and it is doubtful whether by weaving wool or cotton they will ever obtain as much profit as would accrue to them from the manufacture of paper, silk and sugar. As a rule it may be observed that in point of order and cleanliness, as well as in the application of machinery, these establishments leave much to be desired. On the other hand, the factories are surrounded by well-kept gardens and luxuriant pleasure-grounds, a proof that the mental and moral refinement no less than the physical well-being of the working men are attended to.

The people employed in the mills of this neighbourhood seem to be an intelligent and cheerful race, and not to grudge many hours' attention to their monotonous business. There are probably as many females as males at work in the paper factories, and everywhere children of tender age; but they all look healthy, and their spirits are so exuberant that it seems difficult to maintain among them that silence and discipline which, according to English ideas, are necessary to enforce steady occupation. German, Swiss and English manufacturers, whose silk or cotton mills flourish at San

Leucio, Caserta and other southern localities, have no words sufficient to praise the good qualities of their Campanian workmen—their docility, sobriety, assiduousness and honesty; but this good opinion does not extend beyond the rank and file, and the masters declare that they could do nothing with Campanian foremen and overseers; these must all be brought here from the northern regions. This seeming incapacity of Italians, and especially southern Italians, to obey the rule of Italians, is only too apparent in the army, the navy, the workhouses, gaols and penitentiaries, and other branches of the organization of the State, and will, I am afraid, for a long time constitute the weakness of the country. "*Che volite? È la Nazione!*" (It is the national failing), said to me a Neapolitan sea-captain years ago, when I allowed myself some remarks about the gabble kept up by the crew of a man-of-war as they rowed us from the ship to the shore. It is the national failing—the failing of the noisy Trojans when confronted by the silent "courage-breathing" Achæans, but it is a grievous one in war or peace, and is only to be corrected by a strict rule, which no one here seems either willing or able to introduce. Some of the girls at work pouted or grinned at the foreign visitors as they passed, and allowed themselves some harmless jokes at our expense, without however diverting their attention from the task before them—a task about which they plied their fingers with a nimbleness

fully as marvellous as the volubility with which they wagged their tongues.

All round the walls of the chambers of Mr. Lefevre's paper-mills, pictures of Madonnas and saints were pasted up, apparently by the operatives themselves. The whole wall of each room was so studded with these prints and daubs up to a certain height, that it had the appearance of the screens or dadoes set up now-a-days by some fashionable London ladies in their drawing-rooms. These prints, most of them coarse and hideous, and the martyrdoms and miracles they represented, with the written traditions intended to illustrate them, reflect no great credit upon the clerical masters from whom these poor benighted devotees receive their instruction.

We left Sora, after vainly waiting three days for a lull in the pouring rain, and at last were driven by despair to attempt our escape, which we effected by quitting the valley of the Liris, and striking across the hills in the direction of San Germano. Our intention was to end our short trip by a visit to Monte Cassino, the famous cradle of Western Monachism, head and heart of the Benedictine Order. We alighted at the hotel door at San Germano, took up our quarters there, and even engaged a guide for the contemplated ascent on the morrow. But the weather continued so perverse in the evening, and gave so little promise of mending on the morrow, that by a sudden change of mind we called for our bill and our luggage, and drove

at once to the station, whence a late train conveyed us in a few hours to Rome.

Six months were spent in Rome in watching events as they passed, and it was only on Sunday, the 31st of May, that I found leisure to accomplish the little excursion I had long meditated—a visit to the *Badia di Monte Cassino*. The only train available for my purpose left Rome at eleven in the evening, and I set out in a chilly but glorious night, lit by the moon at its full. The express reached the station of Cassino or San Germano after a four hours' journey, part of which I dozed, employing the rest in a contemplation of that bright outer world which looked so intense yet so unreal in that weird moonshine.

A little after three A.M. I found at the station a young guide who volunteered to take me up to the monastery at once, and after tarrying for a few minutes for a cup of coffee (value 1½*d.*) at a little shop in San Germano, I dismissed the donkey which had been saddled and bridled for my accommodation, and set off on foot.

The road strikes immediately across the village, and it was only when I was rid of the last houses that I had my way, steep and stony, open before me, with the castle of San Germano—"castle of King Manfred, of excommunicated memory," as my guide called it—on a spur of the mountain on my right, and on the left, far away on the summit, the heavy square mass of the buildings of the

monastery. I had been for some time out of violent bodily exercise, never climbing in Rome above the terrace of the Pincio; and, as my young guide was going up at a slashing pace, light as a bird, I had to follow him panting and blowing, and soon was free from the chill which had crept upon me with the night air. The frequent halts to which my shortness of breath compelled me allowed me leisure to look up and down and all round the ever-varying scene. The very first streak of dawn was spreading its pearly light on the eastern hemisphere, faintly yet gradually affecting the glimmer of the moonlight which flooded all the landscape on the other side; that intense light revealing and yet blending and somewhat blurring together all the objects in sight—nature in all countries, as I think, and especially in Italy, never displaying greater wonders than in those witching hours of dawn when all mortals but myself sleep.

Throughout the first stages of the ascent the road winds through straggling oak woods, the remnants of those hallowed groves which monastic reverence—to its praise be it said—harboured and protected, when lay greed felled all the timber around; and the long lingering notes of the nightingales which found in that foliage their last refuge, accompanied us all the way long. The mountain we climbed is a grim and bleak mass of rock, though the richest vegetation peeps through all gaps and crevices where man has, if not coaxed it up, at

least not interfered with it. The mountain is steep, pyramidal, and it has at its base great sharp spurs or buttresses, rising one above the other—formidable outworks of a formidable natural fortress. The ascent though fatiguing is not long, and in little more than one hour we stood before the door of the monastery, which was still closed and beset by a score of rustics of both sexes, who were waiting for admission to the early mass.

I was not sorry for the delay. I walked round the building to a commanding spot, and from this surveyed the subjacent region, fully lighted now by the first rays of the rising sun. It was the counterpart of the scene I had contemplated from below, as I wound round the base of the hill on my journey hither from Sora, six months before: a green fertile plain, hemmed in by bleak, rugged hills, with snowy mountains in the distance. Immediately in the rear of the hill on which the monastery stands is a bare mountain mass which they call Monte Cairo. The sea, though not distant, is completely shut out from view.

Soon after five the doors were open. I allowed the peasants to precede me, and went in after an interval spent in looking about me. The monastery consists of a very large square mass of buildings, surrounded by an outer wall on the entrance side, and reared on lofty walls above the steep, towering like a citadel on all other sides—a plain mass of building, looking at it from the outside, of very

little architectural pretensions, with walls for the most part blank, like those of an Eastern edifice, and only here and there pierced with rows of narrow casements, and a few bulging balconies placed at random without order or design. Before the lofty main door are two of those old Lombard or Byzantine couchant lions, usually with lambs between their paws, rudely carved in granite or basalt, of which one sees so many specimens at the doors of the Mediæval Cathedrals of Northern Italy. These formerly lay, in all probability, at the entrance of the old convent church inside the monastery, but they have been sent out here in the cold by the innovators of the seventeenth century, to whom such things were merely remnants of an age of barbarism. It was lucky they were not broken up at the time, and burnt for lime.

The door is passed, and one proceeds through a narrow tunnel, up a flat staircase, all hollowed out in the rock, the entrance being the only part of the old Benedictine establishment with which the modernizing spirit of recent times had not interfered. Emerging from this narrow pass I came out upon a large piazza, or patio—the Spanish word better describes the locality—separated from two side patios by a handsome colonnade, and with a well in the middle. The two lateral patios are planted, garden-wise, and the whole area forms a bright, pleasant and fragrant lounge. Opposite to

the entrance, across the central patio, is a grand *scalinata* or flight of steps, flanked by two colossal statues of Benedict and his sister Scholastica; at the top of the stairs one finds himself in another grand patio about fifty feet above the others, also with a well in the centre, and again a colonnade all round, the side facing the entrance being taken up by the façade of the convent church. The church is all gold and marble, all modern, somewhat after the design of San Martino at Naples—reminding me of the sumptuous chapel of Philip II. at the Escurial, though without the gloom and solemnity of the Spanish edifice. As I entered, a ray of sunshine with all the motes dancing in it crossed the stately nave from a window in the vault to the marble pavement, lighting up the profuse gilding, a great fresco by Luca Giordano over the entrance door, and some bright groups of saints and angels on the ceiling. I rambled on to the vestry, explored the crypt, wandered unchallenged along vast, long and gloomy corridors, flanked on one side by the mostly untenanted cells of the monks, went up one winding staircase and down another, my foot-tread the only sound that broke silence, the vast edifice all still and dark, as if wholly uninhabited and ghost-haunted. There was size, there was a certain majesty and grandeur to fascinate the beholder, but little or no architectural beauty anywhere—nothing like the interest inspired by some of the old convents in Rome or Florence, nothing like that

sublime artistic folly of the Visconti, the Certosa of Pavia.

As my ill luck would have it, both Don Luigi Tosti, the historian of the monastery, and the most conspicuous member of the present fraternity, and Don Ruggero, another monk of high rank for whom I had letters, happened to be absent; but I sent in my card to the Brother Archivist, who immediately placed himself at my disposal, received me with great courtesy at the top of the flight of steps on the patio before the church, and admitted me to a sight of whatever was kept under lock and key. He took me again over the church and all I had seen before, showed everything he thought might have escaped my notice, gave me a cup of black coffee in the vestry, and finally ushered me into the library and archives, the department more immediately committed to his care. There is not much to be seen there: specimens of the earliest typographic art in the library, a famous MS. of Dante in the archives, with the deeds, bulls and other documents connected with the monastery, most of which have been illustrated at full length by Tosti in his History of the Abbey.

On the whole, I confess, the sensation was very like disappointment. Here was Monte Cassino, the refuge of the great Hildebrand, the nursery of many a Pope of his school, the great bulwark of Church arrogance against Imperial power in Franconian and Swabian times—and, with all that, the place is

so provokingly brand new, and has so little to show or say for itself! Without being in the least partial to monasticism, I have at all times been curious about monkish rookeries, have visited the Chartreuse of Grenoble, the Novalaise at the foot of Mont Cenis, the Great St. Bernard's, Bobbio, and other friars' places, and though I have often been strongly impressed with the awful character of the site, I have seldom found much to interest me either in the actual monastic buildings or in their contents. The monks have white-washed and almost utterly obliterated the Past. Tinterne, Netley, Furness, and other Abbey churches battered by Protestant fanaticism or rapacity in England, exhibit, as mere ruins, more of their ancient beauty and grace than many of the claustral edifices on which the misplaced liberality of consistent Romanism has been lavished for centuries. The only place—besides Assisi—I believe, retaining all its primitive type, at least in Italy, is St. Michael della Chiusa, in Val di Suza, Piedmont, and even that is rapidly going to ruin.

It is difficult to see how Monte Cassino may escape the same fate. The Italian Government, either on their own impulse, or at the suggestion of benevolent strangers, have been willing to spare Monte Cassino, and keep up as a museum what was once a sanctuary, leaving its twenty-four monks unmolested, and allowing them a collective

pension of 22,000 lire (880*l.*); but how can these poor recluses with such a sum keep up their huge premises, their grand gilt church, the mass of buildings which monastic feudalism reared on the spot where Benedict only pitched a few tents or huts to be for his followers an abode of poverty and self-denial? The whole edifice is modern, and seems to me flimsy; but, were it ever so solid, it is in want of daily repairs, like St. Peter's or the Vatican, and where are the necessary funds to come from? And, were even the funds forthcoming, what would be the use of it all? Clearly monasticism has served its time and must vanish from the land. The twenty-two monks lingering at Monte Cassino have a college for sixty pupils, lay or ecclesiastical, and a seminary for perhaps as many rising priestlings. I asked whether the schools pay: the answer was, "only partially"; they are in fact a burden to the ill-provided fraternity. Down below, in the town, I saw the huge buildings of a former seminary, now forsaken and going to ruin, because the seminarists have been sent up to the monastery, to their great inconvenience, and not without damage to their health, owing to the excessive keenness of the air.

I struck up quite a friendship with Don Bertario Gudaleta, the good archivist who did the honours of the establishment. With a little discretion, forbearance and good breeding, I think nothing is easier than to speak out one's mind to the most

pious, gentlemanly and rational members of the Catholic clergy, without giving them offence or forfeiting their esteem. You find your priest, when arguing familiarly, a different being from what he is when, like the Pope, he speaks *ex cathedrâ*. I must have been at least for two hours talking with my monk in the library, and in a long stroll up and down the corridor before it, and there is hardly anything connected with Church and State, convent laws, the unfitness of ancient institutions to modern uses, and finally with religion as a basis of morality, upon which we did not touch, and yet I do not think I "put my foot in it" in a single instance. It is true, I had nearly all the talk to myself; my interlocutor, a tall, lean, dark man, very shrewd, in spite of his solemn ascetic look, listening to me blandly, attentively, and now and then murmuring assent.

This was not all politeness, for he long insisted that I should stay the day with them and see the brethren and their pupils at their meal in the refectory, and, upon my declining, he promised me a visit from himself and the Abate Tosti in Rome.

The fact is that the dinner time at the convent was noon, and I, having been on my legs since three in the morning—it was then nine—with no other support than two small cups of black coffee, was too faint with fatigue and hunger to wait for the canonical hour, so that after an hour's stroll in

the garden, I took an affectionate leave of the friendly monk, and went my way down to San Germano.

I sat down to breakfast at the inn *(Albergo Pompei)* long after eleven A.M. Food I certainly had, but little rest or peace, for a large party of officers and civilians, with pretty young ladies, were seated at a table near mine, all of them bawling and shouting *more Italico*, so loudly and wildly, that, had I had a revolver, I might have fired its six chambers in the air, and the reports would in all that racket have been inaudible. My orders to the waiter were so, at all events, and I had to speak to him in dumb show. Unable to bear the din, I sallied forth again and visited the curiosities of the town; the ruins of an ancient Roman amphitheatre, several churches, and, among others, one dedicated to Santa Quadratilla, which is only the inside of an ancient Roman or perhaps Oscan tomb, dug in the rock and built with enormous square blocks of stone without cement, one of the most wonderful specimens of Cyclopean masonry the world can exhibit. I mention the spot because there occurs no allusion to it in the guide-books.

The church was crowded with people in their festive attire, some extraordinary solemnity going on that Sunday both in that and other places of worship all over the town. The sight of that gay swarming peasantry was pleasing, and here and

there good models of manly or feminine beauty, such as delight the artist's eye in the Roman studios, were to be met with. But I shall not soon forget the shock my nerves, accustomed as they are to bad language throughout Italy, received, as I moved from group to group, from the oaths and ribaldries and obscenities which old and young, but especially the latter, and, I may say, women as well as men, bawled out in my ear, evidently from mere idle habit, and upon no provocation, and apparently without attaching any meaning to it. There was a lad, about twelve years of age, good-looking and belonging, to judge from his mien and dress, to a well-to-do rustic family, who crossed my path, again and again singing at the top of his voice from mere *gaîté de cœur*, a *Canzonaccia*, of which I could not venture to quote a single line either in English or Italian, and for which, had I had my way, I would certainly and without hesitation have had him soundly whipped at the cart's tail. The indulgence in foul language, only, as I said, too common in the country, becomes more and more prevalent at every step from north to south, and it is especially intolerable in Rome and Naples. Still not even on the Molo, or at Largo di Castello, have I ever heard such horrors as here at San Germano, at the foot of Monte Cassino, in a town which was the most important fief of the monastery, the people of which were for centuries the vassals, and at all times the pupils and penitents, of those monks

in whose keeping lay the civilization of the whole region.

I must say that I never went near a monastic or other ecclesiastic community without finding the population in its immediate neighbourhood the most corrupt and demoralized of all *canaille*. "The nearer the Church the farther from God."

CHAPTER XVI.

LUNIGIANA.

The Tunnel of the Bracco—Reminiscences of the Road—A Diplomatic Campaign—Prince Napoleon—His Doings in Tuscany—His Tactics and Strategy—Lunigiana—The Country—The People—Physical and Moral Sufferings of the Fifth Corps—Solferino—Villafranca.

THERE will soon be no limit to the prodigies of fast travelling. From the Pyrenees to the Alps and from the Alps to the Tiber, I travelled this last January in forty-four hours, feeling all along that I was being unnecessarily robbed of one-fourth of my time. From the frontier at Ventimiglia to the Italian capital I came in less than eighteen hours, which a decent express could easily reduce to less than twelve.

Up to very recent times this "littoral," or sea-coast route along the Mediterranean had to struggle against what seemed insurmountable material and political obstacles. The carriage-road of the *Cornice*, from Nice to Spezia, was only achieved after many years' toil and by a series of miracles of engineering skill amounting almost to "impossibilities." Even when that had been accomplished,

its usefulness was partly neutralized by the hindrances interposed to the traveller's progress, either along shore to Tuscany, or across the Apennine pass of La Cisa to the Emilia, by the vexations of the passport and custom offices at the barriers of the petty States of Parma, Modena and Lucca. When railways first became known in Italy, Dukes and Grand Dukes drew their lines in obedience to paltry considerations of local interest; and rather in opposition, than with any good will, to the world's intercourse; and it was only submission to the will of his autocratic patron, the Emperor Napoleon, that extorted the Pope's consent to the construction of the Rome and Civita Vecchia Railway necessary for the conveyance of the French troops which garrisoned Castle St. Angelo. After the conquest of Rome, and the establishment of the Italian Government there, the prolongation of that line across the Tuscan Marches to Leghorn, and its conjunction with the Tuscan net, became obviously expedient. Travellers could go by rail from Rome to the baths of Ardenza, Viareggio and Spezia, and in the meanwhile new exploits of technical ingenuity laid a way for the rails along that Eastern and Western Riviera, which it had cost so much trouble and treasure to make practicable for carriages, and the whistle of the locomotive was soon heard from Nice and Ventimiglia to Genoa, and from Genoa to Chiavari and Sestri di Levante. There only remained Spezia and the huge mountain

mass of the Bracco, through which a tunnel had to be bored—an enterprise only second in magnitude to that by which the Alps were conquered at Mont Cenis. The tunnel was achieved, the whole line from Ventimiglia to Rome was opened, and a daily "direct" or express train is, or will soon be, running, making this not only the best way but actually *the* way into Italy.

It traverses a region of perpetual spring. We were still early in January, yet I only saw the Alps and knew not their winter. There is nothing even in Italy more lovely than the Riviera, both to the west and east of Genoa, and hardly anything even on the Alps more sublime than the view of that cluster of lofty marble pinnacles known as the "Monti di Luna," or "Alpi Apuane," the mountains of Carrara, as they taper up to the sky in their purity, half-shrouded in gauze-like haze from the immense distance, yet distinctly visible for miles and miles from many points on the coast, and constituting a conspicuous landmark for the mariner as he nears them from the sea.

It was night as the express train bore me from Genoa to Pisa; but the bare glimpses of those dim localities which had been familiar to me both in early youth and in mature age, called forth reminiscences which lit up the landscape to the eye of imagination, and rehearsed in the space of a few hours long periods of the existence of former days.

Let me see! On what occasion was it that I last travelled along this road? It was in 1859, when I rode in the suite of the French Emperor's cousin, Prince Napoleon Jerome, at that time leading the famous Fifth Corps at the opening of what was called "a diplomatic campaign."

I had left London—the reader will kindly indulge me in a few lines of personal narrative, on the assurance that it is necessary to the development of my subject, and that I shall say no more about myself than I can help—I had left London early in May of that year, just as the armies of France were crossing the Alps, bent on driving the Austrians from the position they had long occupied as masters of Lombardo-Venetia, and paramount lords over all Italy. It had at all times been my habit to go to Italy whenever anything was stirring there, and upon the first rumours of war I had telegraphed to a friend in Turin to buy me a horse, as I intended to follow the march of the Franco-Sardinian army as an historiographer at least, if I was too old to join the ranks as a combatant.

My telegram unfortunately had, according to custom, been submitted to Count Cavour, at that time Home Minister as well as Prime Minister, and upon my reaching Turin, I learnt that a veto had been put on my friend's purchase of a horse, and an intimation was conveyed to me that it was the express desire of the Emperor Napoleon that no person connected with the press should

be suffered to appear within many miles of the allied armies.

The Emperor himself saw reason soon afterwards to change his mind on the subject; but, in the meanwhile, I, taking Cavour's declaration *au pied de la lettre*, and seeing the direct road to the battle-fields of Lombardy barred against me, conceived some hope of reaching the same goal by a round-about way through Tuscany, hearing that Prince Napoleon, of whose company his Imperial cousin probably wished to be rid, was to assemble a *corps d'armée* at Florence, and hence cross the Apennines into the provinces of the Emilia, and operate in concert with the main army on the left flank of the Austrians on the Po.

The remainder of May was wasted in Florence. The Prince left Genoa on the 22nd. He landed at Leghorn on the following day, and only made his triumphal entrance into the Tuscan capital on the 31st. Much time was lost in Florence in gay and solemn festivities, parades and receptions, and it was not before the 16th of June that the Prince set out for Lucca, where his staff was waiting for him.

His unconscionable delays at such a juncture were of course accounted for in a variety of ways, by some the fault being laid upon the Prince himself, by others the cause being referred to some deep scheme of the tenebrous man who deemed himself called by Providence to mould the destinies of Italy.

The Emperor of the French, it was plausibly suggested, wished to free the Italians from the Austrian yoke; but he had little fancy for a united, or even a thoroughly independent, Italy. He was guided by the ideas of his great uncle. He would create a Kingdom of Italy at Milan, a State of Central Italy at Florence, and a Southern Kingdom at Naples, joining the three in a Confederation under the presidency of the Pope at Rome, and under his own high patronage as sovereign of France. In the North he intended to enthrone Victor Emmanuel King of Sardinia, now allied to the Imperial dynasty by the recent marriage of his daughter, the Princess Clotilde, with Prince Napoleon; in the Centre he would place this Prince himself, and the South would be reserved for one of the heirs of Joachim Murat.

With a view to feel his way towards the accomplishment of this grand design, while the Emperor himself crossed the Ticino with full confidence that he could "crumple up the Austrians like a sheet of paper," he directed his princely cousin to proceed on his Tuscan expedition to see what chances he might have of ingratiating himself with his future subjects. The Prince himself however strongly and emphatically, on every occasion, disclaimed any participation in the ambitious plans which were attributed to him, and which some of his friends at any rate were certainly laying out for him. In his solemn address to the Tuscans, published from

the Roads of Leghorn, on board the Reine Hortense, on the 23rd of May, he declared that "his mission was purely military," and that "France, satisfied with her power, proposed to herself, as her only object, to have upon her borders a friendly people who should owe their regeneration to her." And on a later occasion, on some of his flatterers throwing out some hints to the effect that there was nothing he had not a right to expect from the gratitude of the people he had come to free, he answered, with some disdain, that "when a man was only one step removed from the Imperial throne of France, he was not likely to look with any covetousness to the chances of a petty Italian Principality."

All this however would not do. The Italians found that his Imperial Highness "protested too much," and that his private doings did not correspond with his public sayings; and they had fallen into the habit of always believing the contrary of what a Bonaparte spoke. The strength of will and the power of the Emperor Napoleon met with more than their match in the subtle genius of Count Cavour. The idea of Italian unity rose with every step the country made towards the attainment of national existence, and Prince Napoleon, who had been in Florence in early youth, and had won no golden opinions there at the time, soon became aware of the invincible repugnance the people felt for his person, and had to confess to himself that his

mission in search of a crown had been thus far a failure.

Perhaps it struck him then that a crown can be more hopefully fought than manœuvred for; and perhaps the world's obloquy and outcry at his inaction in spite of himself spurred and shamed him into exertion. The allied armies had already crossed the Ticino, and defeated the Austrians in a decisive battle at Magenta on the 4th of June. They had, four days later, entered Milan, where Victor Emmanuel had been proclaimed King, and were pressing on the footsteps of the retreating enemy, who was withdrawing to the line of the Mincio and his strongholds of the Quadrilateral. Now or never was the time for Prince Napoleon to carve his way to fortune and to greatness. He had already lost the opportunity of co-operating with the main army on the Po at Piacenza, but he could still do good service under Mantua, or he could cross the great river at Ferrara, and carry the war into the Venetian territory, attacking Legnago and Verona while the Allies did their utmost against Mantua and Peschiera. The Fifth Corps had been strengthened by large detachments from other corps; the Prince had 40,000 of the very best French troops under him, most of them picked veterans from the Algerian army, besides a division of 8,000 to 10,000 untried, but well armed and thoroughly disciplined, Tuscan troops.

His way into Lombardy lay over the Apennines, and as to roads across those mountains, he only had the *embarras du choix*. The Apennine chain, after running close to the sea all round the Gulf of Genoa as far as Spezia, proceeds inland across the country from west to east, its southern valleys of the Magra, Serchio, Arno and Tiber, widening and lengthening out as the rivers flow to the sea at their respective mouths near Sarzana, Lucca, Pisa and Rome. From Tuscany to the Emilia the Prince had before him,—1st, the road of the Filigare, leading directly across the mountains from Florence to Bologna; 2nd, the road of La Porretta, now traversed by a railway, from Florence to Pistoia, and hence to Bologna; 3rd, the road of the Abetone, from Pistoia to Modena; 4th, that of the Cerreto, from Lucca to Modena; 5th, that of Fivizzano, from Sarzana to Reggio; and finally, 6th, that of La Cisa, from Sarzana to Parma; to say nothing of two other roads from Florence into Romagna, the one leading to Faenza, the other to Forli.

Previous to the battle of Magenta the Prince's delays were supposed to arise from political as well as strategical causes; for the Emperor Napoleon intended Italy to be freed by war, not by revolution; and as he was at first anxious to secure the integrity of the Papal territory, he did not wish to interfere with the Austrian garrisons which had the charge of order in the Legations. Up to that time therefore it was inexpedient to try any of the roads

leading to Bologna or Romagna, and yet it was upon the Filigare and La Porretta that the Prince from the very outset *échelonnéed* those troops which he deemed it expedient to remove from the dissipation and ophthalmia of Florence. But after Magenta, the Austrian garrisons having perforce abandoned the Papal States, the Cardinal Legate fled from Bologna, and the people of the Legations, freed from priestly rule, proclaimed their independence. Politically therefore it had become immaterial what road the Prince might choose, but strategically his aim should have been to reach the plain of the Po at Borgoforte and Ferrara as soon as possible, and his march should have been either across the Porretta to Bologna, or the Abetone to Modena. But the question is first, whether he was himself in a hurry to reach the battle-field; and secondly, whether the Emperor was under any anxiety to receive such great reinforcements as his cousin was bringing to him—reinforcements which might ensure him a more complete victory than he desired. Whatever might be the reason, the fact is that Prince Napoleon, when he at last decided to tear himself from Florence, issued orders to withdraw all the troops from the roads of the Filigare, the Porretta and the Abetone, and rendezvoused at Lucca, whence he intended to lead his main force to Sarzana and over the Pass of La Cisa, to Parma, making thus the longest *détour* he could contrive.

I had solicited the Prince's gracious permission to travel with his staff, and obtained it at the close of a half-hour's interview I had with him at the Palazzo delle Crocette, his residence in Florence. He received me standing, but soon seated me near him on his sofa, and assured me that I could not better please him than by writing freely and openly whatever I witnessed, putting upon it whatever construction or comment my own reason and conscience might suggest. He then threw out some hints as to the indiscretion of the "Unitarians" or Mazzinians, assured me that "to his great regret, his cousin harboured strong, invincible objections to Italian unity," and thought that "my well-known divergence from Mazzini's views in that respect might incline me to accept any compromise imposed by necessity." I answered that I did not flatter myself with possessing any influence over my countrymen, and that I was certainly no disciple of the Mazzinian *tout ou rien* school; but that in so far as depended on me, my countrymen would always seem justified in taking whatever they could, and even taking *all*, if all could be got. I fancy he made rather a wry face as he heard my candid declaration; still he did not fall from his word; and not only did he raise no objection to my following the army, but as I had served as a volunteer in the campaign of 1848, he allowed and even advised me to don my uniform, and ride with his staff or with that of any of his generals.

I was not, I confess, greatly prepossessed with his presence. He had on a French Marshal's uniform, with a dainty red and gold kepi, and the smallness of the head-gear strangely contrasted with the full, broad, whiskerless face. Persons who had known him all their life and had seen him lately, had some difficulty in recognizing his fine features, disguised as they were under the deep layers of the flabby fat with which, it seemed, the brief happiness of married life had compassed him round. The face was beaming with intelligence, no doubt, and the lineaments were certainly those of the great founder of his dynasty; but there was an oiliness about the skin, a twinkle about the eye, which had nothing in common either with the Napoleon of Arcole or with him of St. Helena: the expression was one of habitual simulation; and I felt all the time that I stood rather in the presence of a greasy monk or quibbling lawyer than of a soldier.

I shook him heartily by the hand as I left him nevertheless; for I thought that I should yet owe him the happiness of witnessing my country's battles. I got my tunic, kepi and everything ready; bought two horses, a small black Arab, and a mare of English breed with a hunter's bone and muscle, hired a stable lad, whom I soon had to dismiss as a *sbarazzino*, or Florentine scamp, and set out on horseback on the 16th of June, on the road to Pistoia and Lucca, at which latter place I found myself towards evening of the second day an

hour or two before the Prince's arrival. On the following morning, the 18th, soon after five, the Prince was in the saddle at the head of his staff. The whole of the Coffinière division, with a fine regiment of hussars and a formidable park of artillery, preceded and followed the Imperial Commander-in-chief. Our first day's march took us over eighteen miles of road to Pietrasanta on the borders of Tuscany; the following day we were at Marsa, seven miles further; and twenty-four hours later at Sarzana, with only the bed of the Magra between us and the Gulf of Spezia.

Between the valley of the Serchio which empties itself into the sea below Lucca, and the valley of the Magra which ends its course near Sarzana, lies that vast mass of mountains to which I have already alluded, which detaching itself from the main chain of the Apennines, towers over the sea, leaving only a narrow strip of alluvial soil between the last steep slope of the hills and the deep waves of the Mediterranean. Out of the bowels of these Apuan Alps or Monti di Luna, now more familiarly known as Carrara mountains, is quarried the white marble which is made to live under the sculptor's chisel. To the Duchy of Massa and Carrara, as well as to the valley of the Magra, throughout the districts of Aulla and Pontremoli, the Italians give the name of Lunigiana, or territory of Luna, from the name of an ancient town supposed to have existed on the site of Sarzana. The road from Spezia, or from

Sarzana, to Parma, designed by the French engineers of the First Empire as a great military highway, was now in an excellent state of preservation. A splendid bridge on the Magra, just built, joined Spezia with Sarzana; from this latter place the road proceeded to Aulla, till lately the great stronghold of the Duke of Modena, who had dotted the hills closing the narrow valley with forts bristling with cannon, and was busy to the last filling up hollows and levelling steep places with a view to allow free play for his formidable artillery.

Notwithstanding the strenuous endeavours of this royal Paladin, no man ever stood in awe of that stronghold of Aulla. Somehow the very soldiers who garrisoned it, and the labourers who dug at its trenches, laughed at their master and employer. Rotten eggs and baked apples, it was thought, were only too powerful missiles to batter down that *bicocca*, and in fact long before our approach, that doughty ducal warrior lost heart; and all at once, and unattacked, he issued orders for the evacuation of the mighty citadel, and of all its outworks, detached forts and watch towers; his troops spiking the guns and taking to their heels after their lord, who never stopped till he fled for refuge to Brescello, close under the guns of the bastions of Mantua.

After passing Aulla the road enters the Parmesan territory at Villafranca, and soon reaches Pontremoli, the little capital of that district of Lunigiana

which belonged to Tuscany till 1847, and was then ceded to Parma, in consequence of one of those private arrangements by which Italian princes made over their land and subjects to one another, without consulting either the exigencies of geography or the inclinations and interests of the people. From Pontremoli the great military highway crosses the Apennine Pass at La Cisa. It descends the mountains through Barceto and Cassio, and comes to the plain at the confluence of the two great valleys of the Taro and Ceno, at Fornovo. The distance from Fornovo to Parma is only fourteen miles, and all the way from Spezia to Parma is reckoned at eighty miles, or 120 kilomètres—a distance easily to be got over in a four days' march.

Although the road across Lunigiana and over La Cisa dates from the First and was only completed during the reign of the Third Napoleon, this pass across the Apennines has been at all times of the greatest importance, and was in the Middle Ages the theatre of great warlike events. Here it was that the German Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, on his retreat from Rome with an army greatly reduced by pestilence, was stopped by the Lombard Leaguers in 1169, and ran imminent risks from which he was only extricated by the aid of his ally, the Marquis Obizzo Malaspina, Lord of Pontremoli, who smuggled him away by unknown paths; and here it was that Charles VIII. of France, a fugitive

from his ephemeral conquest of Naples in 1494, was met by the Italian allies who were awaiting him at the *débouché* of Fornovo; and he had with great difficulty to cut his way through their vastly superior forces, thus almost miraculously escaping to his own country.

The natural amenity and fertility of this little Italian nook of Lunigiana is admirably aided by an agricultural thrift that gives it the appearance of the best-trained garden. Alongshore, on the plain and on the mountain skirts, are those old, rich olive groves from which the most valued Tuscan or Lucca oil is pressed. Inland the narrow valleys are overgrown with vineyards, and chestnut woods of the greatest luxuriance, mantling the uplands to the highest summits; the whole region is shady and cool, moist and verdant, and its only scourge is the impetuosity of the lawless torrents which are suffered to ravage the plain, unhindered by dyke or embankment, and only checked by the fretted rock of the mountain-side. Of the great mountains themselves little is seen from the road; to obtain an unimpeded view of their beauty and loftiness it is necessary to cross the Magra, and look back upon them from the windings and turnings of the ascent of the Bracco, the huge spur through which the railway traveller is now robbed of the light of day.

At every stage in his triumphal progress Prince Napoleon trod over the *débris* of departed great-

ness; at Lucca he slept at the palace which was once the residence of Bourbon princes; at Massa his abode was the castle of the old feudal hordes the Cibo, more lately the residence of a branch of the House of Austria Este; at Pontremoli, he was at home among the relics of the stronghold of the Malaspina, shadowed by the old tower of Castruccio. His task as a liberator had its burdens, but it had also its sweets. At Massa, a bevy of the twelve prettiest damsels of the middle class that the town could boast were sent to welcome him at the city gates, all decked out in white robes with wreaths of flowers, and gay tricolor ribbons fluttering about their golden hair. Two of the very handsomest—for no hyperbolic phrase could be too much for them—laid hold of the "Conquering Hero's" reins, the ten others ranged themselves on either side of his steed, and under this escort the Commander-in-chief was ushered in amid shouts and applause and a din of festive bells, loud enough to shake the dilapidated fortress still crowning the hill from its foundation. These lady-grooms and lackeys would yield to no one the honour of holding the Prince's bridle and stirrups as he alighted under the gateway of the ducal mansion; and for his part, not to be outdone in deeds of courtesy, the Prince offered an arm to each of the two girls who acted as leaders of the sisterhood, and with stately gallantry led the way up the grand white marble staircase; and, as he stood at the door of

the State apartments, he turned with a right Imperial bow to the galaxy of fair attendants, and, disengaging the arms of the two he had honoured with his especial notice, kissed—tell it not in the Palais Royal—kissed both of them on both cheeks; the smack could be heard from where I stood, and I saw the cheeks which were honoured with so high a distinction colour up to the flaming crimson of the Prince's own kepi.

The same genial welcome awaited the Napoleonide at Sarzana, Pontremoli, and all the way up to the mountains. Lunigiana, rid of its princely tyrants from the very outbreak of hostilities, was immediately occupied by the troops of Victor Emmanuel, and claimed as conquered territory; for the King, aware of the importance of this mere strip of territory to guard the rear of what was to become his great naval station at Spezia, lost no time in splitting hairs as to the definition of Dictatorship or Protectorate, as he had done in Tuscany, but availed himself of the good disposition of these people towards him and took possession of them and of their district, declaring it an integral part of his kingdom for ever. The Prince was thus at home among the subjects of his father-in-law, and all the authorities as well as the population turned out to do him honour.

While all was thus smooth and pleasant on the Prince's path, the main bulk of his troops had rather a hard time of it. The 80th regiment of the line,

for instance, with which I marched several miles between Pietrasanta and Massa, dragged itself wofully footsore and exhausted in our rear. These men had landed at Leghorn about the same time as the Prince, but instead of following him to Florence they were marched up to Pistoia, and sent to the Tuscan confine at the Abetone Pass on the road to Modena. There they spent several uncomfortable weeks doing nothing; but they were suddenly summoned down from their mountain fastnesses and bidden to join the army by forced marches at Lucca; and however anxious they might be for one day of rest and comfortable bivouac on Lucca's shady bastions, they had to follow their leader with so little consideration for their physical powers, that one-half of the regiment lagged behind, a swarm of stragglers. Several other corps were in the same condition. The French army in Tuscany had hitherto only "marched up the hill and down again," and alas! a toil as fruitless as that which they had endured was now again before them and us all.

By a halt at Massa the whole body of troops was at last brought together, and it was ordered to proceed by *échelons* of 5,000 men. Although they were as yet so far from having any share in military operations, they had frequent occasions to wage war against the elements. At Massa, for two days, the troops under their poor tents had to withstand floods of incessant rain. At Sarzana, besides a perfect

deluge, they were visited by a terrific thunderstorm and an earthquake. Large stores of provisions and the knapsacks and even the muskets of a whole company of infantry were swept away by the swollen tide of a petty river, on the sands of which, on account of the dryness of its bed, preferable to the damp grass, a French regiment of foot had had the improvidence to encamp. On the morrow, the camp at Sarzana presented a sorrowful sight; things animate and inanimate had fallen into unspeakable disorder, and nothing was ready for that march for Aulla, for which four o'clock A.M. had been appointed. Serious fears were entertained that the mountain torrent, Aullela, which must be forded before reaching Aulla, might have swollen to such a height as to stop further progress; and sappers and pioneers had to clear the roads of the masses of rock which the heavy rains of the night had carried down from the steep and loose ravines on the mountain sides along our track. But the troops had other enemies of a far different nature to contend with, and against these they began to entertain savage feelings. The Fifth Corps carried all its necessary provisions for man and beast along with it; but there are manifold objects of luxury the commissariat does not supply, and for these application must be made to inn and shop keepers, and to every description of sutlers and camp-followers. All these dealers possess great advantages over the defenceless soldiers and use them most unmercifully.

In the first place they hold in their hand the coveted article at a crisis in which the people's want of foresight has made the supply altogether inadequate to the demand, and raised commonplace things, such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, &c., to fabulous prices. In the second place, the dealer does not, or chooses not, to understand his customer, and can afford to laugh in his sleeve at all the big *sacrés* that are hurled at his head. In the third place, even when a price has been agreed upon and the bargain struck, and the poor Frenchman puts forth an honest, bright-faced, intelligible twenty-franc piece, the wily dealer gives change in a Babel of *crazie*, *parpagliole*, *mute* and *mezze mute*, reckoning in Tuscan, Lucchese, Modenese, Maltese, Genoese and Parmesan lire, pauls, sous, centimes, &c.—all worn-out coins, sweated into undistinguishable and almost impalpable wafer-like slices, so that not only a stranger, but even a native, can make nothing out of the reckoning, save the satisfaction of testing the truth of Butler's old saw, whether "the pleasure is as great in being cheated as to cheat."

Bad quarters, worse fare, long marches, inclement seasons and occasional squabbles with roguish natives, are the lot of the soldier in any campaign, and he is too well prepared for all serious hardships to mind such mere trifling inconveniences as I have mentioned. But then a campaign, as a rule, has a purpose; it is full of incidents and leads to adventures; it is a battle at the end of a march; it yields

booty, honours, promotion; war is Bellum, a thing of beauty—if we believe Italian etymology—and when hallowed by a good cause, the most delightful as well as the noblest pursuit of man. But who would carry a musket or bestride a saddle in a mere diplomatic campaign? Who would feel disposed to lift up his head and say with pride that he has been one of Plon-Plon's diplomatic soldiers?

We wasted eleven or twelve days in this wearisome march across the Apennine, travelling at the rate of barely eight miles a day, and in one instance, from Aulla to Terrarossa, actually accomplishing one mile's march in the twenty-four hours. Had Prince Napoleon landed at Spezia on the 23rd of May, the day in which he cast anchor at Leghorn, six days could have brought him from Spezia to Parma and Piacenza, five days before the battle of Magenta (June 4); and had he made his best speed, even when he left Florence, after the loss of a month, on the 16th of June, he could have reached the battle-field of Solferino on the 24th; and no one can say what the sudden addition of such a corps as he had under his orders—with the very best regiments of Hussars and Chasseurs d'Afrique—could have achieved towards rendering the Allies' victory complete and decisive. But alas! on that very 24th of June we were still loitering on the Apennines; and as we rose from our bivouac between Berceto and Cassio, we could distinctly hear in the still air the boom of the

cannon of the incipient fray, though we were probably as far as sixty miles from the spot as the crow flies.

I hardly need tell how bitterly men and officers grumbled at the unconscionable delays of their sluggish leader. They murmured that the Prince's life was far too precious in the Emperor's eyes; that it was with a view to screen the Commander-in-chief from bodily harm that the Fifth Corps had been and was being marshalled and paraded about, without the poorest chance of seeing the enemy's face, and was meant never to come in except at the close of the war, bringing the "*Soccorso di Pisa*," as the Italians have it, *i. e.* arriving on the battle-field just one hour after the battle. There was also no lack of men muttering something about the Crimea and the "white-feather,"—words which I was then unwilling to understand, and am now loath to interpret, and saying that the Prince had been sent to Italy to retrieve the honour that he had forfeited five years before, but that by his evident disinclination to press forward to the front rank, he had only further damaged his reputation; and that he would have acted a hundred times more wisely had he never stirred from the Palais Royal or Meudon.

It is not likely that these unfriendly strictures on his conduct ever reached the ears of the diplomatic warrior. Had they even done so, they would not probably have affected his plans; at all events,

that Fabian strategy was consistent to the end. We arrived at Parma on the 27th of June, and were there kept three whole mortal days to rest from a journey in which we had suffered from nothing so much as from impatience. On the 30th we crossed the Po between Sacca and Casal Maggiore, and fell in, at last, with the conquerors of Solferino, who asked us with a sneer what had kept us so long, and "whether it was our horses that suffered from gout, or our men who were afflicted with corns," singing—

"Sopraggiunta è forse a un tratto
La podagra ai tuoi cavalli?
I soldati han forse i calli,
Che non possono marciar?"

It was no joke to us. We tried to console ourselves by thinking that the Adige had not yet been crossed, nor had one stone of the Quadrilateral been shot down. We flattered ourselves that our patience would be acknowledged and rewarded, and we should now be promoted from the rear to the front, whether it was under our present princely leader, or under another less disposed to play the part of the *Noir Fainéant*.

Vain and deceitful hopes! We were led about, all round Mantua, from Casal Maggiore to Piadena, Canneto, Asola, and Ceresara, till we reached Goito on the 4th of July. The heat of the weather was insufferable; and, as we marched in the dust and glare of the day, the men not unfrequently dropped

down before us overpowered by sunstroke. On the 9th we were at Volta; I had attached myself to General Ulloa, who had the command of the Tuscan division, and I was on good terms with all the officers of his staff, and especially with Colonel Seismid Doda, who was at the head of it. Towards evening Doda came to our mess, and informed us that an armistice of three days had been arranged, and that we had our route for Calcinato on the hills of Brescia, above Monte Chiaro. We all got into our saddles and trotted off at nightfall, in a serried squadron, knee to knee, like the three wild riders from Ghent to Aix, in Browning's spirited poem. We took the road to San Cassiano, as our leader wished to treat us to a sight of the battle-field of Solferino. The ground was still, fifteen days after the fight, thickly strewn with soldiers' casques, cartridge-boxes and a variety of warlike wreck. There were more French and Piedmontese than Austrian relics; either because the loss of the Allies was in reality more considerable, or because from the ground we crossed the attack was made and the Allies were more exposed, or, finally, because the Austrian gear, being made of leather, or more valuable stuff and substance, held out greater temptation to the gang of prowlers, whose harvest is among the bodies of the slain. The corpses seemed to have been buried with the utmost carelessness and indecent haste. Graves had not been dug, but the dead had been laid in heaps in

the furrows of the field where they fell, and a few spadefuls of loose mould were thrown upon them. Beasts of prey of all kinds, but especially cats—downright domestic cats; anywhere out of Italy I might have thought them jackalls—were feasting on the remains; half-fleshless bones had been dragged out of the heaving mounds here and there, and the air was not free from that taint by which the unhonoured dead can inflict their vengeance on the irreverent living. The country lay still and calm; the pale young moon strove to outshine the faint last streaks of waning sunset. There lay the plain, the fought-for hill, the solitary tower in its summit. We might have passed by, and never dreamt that on that very spot, so few days before, 400,000 men had met in deadly struggle; hardly a mulberry-branch lay torn or stripped; most of the farm-houses were unscathed by shell or bullet. Had it not been for those desecrated bodies, the scene would have been one of ineffable rural repose. The Italians have long since gathered those scattered remnants; and the consecration of the Solferino Ossuary, which was held this year on the anniversary of the battle, was attended by very numerous survivors of the three nations engaged in it, once such deadly enemies, now happily, and it may be hoped, permanently at peace.

On the following morning, the 10th, at Calcinato, we were thunderstruck on hearing that the truce was to be, "not for three, but for forty days."

There could be no two ways of interpreting the intelligence, and that same afternoon I sold my two horses to a brother officer, and, without waiting for payment, posted the same day to Brescia and Milan. The real news, the signature of the preliminaries of peace at Villafranca, was soon made known, though the first bearers of the tidings at Milan ran danger of their lives, first as spreaders of false alarms, and then as originators of unwelcome reports which proved only too true. Three days later, the 16th, the Emperor drove through the Lombard city in an open barouche, and it was only owing to the presence of King Victor Emmanuel, who sat by his side, that he escaped from the consequences of the indignation which kindled every heart, his own Frenchmen cursing his "treachery" as loudly as the Italians themselves.

The real motives of that sudden resolution which stopped the Allied Armies in their full career of conquest will never be known, for the Emperor's own explanations satisfy no one. The preliminaries of Villafranca bear date of the 11th, and it was only a few days before that Prince Napoleon left us at Volta and repaired to his cousin's head-quarters, at Valleggio, to lay before him the report of his diplomatic campaign. The object of that campaign, whatever it was, had not been accomplished. The scheme of a kingdom of Central Italy had found no abettors in Tuscany, where, on the contrary, every man seemed wild after the "impracticable notion"

of a united Italy. It is not improbable that the stubborn disposition of the Italians, as described by his disappointed relative, struck the Emperor as a flagrant instance of the ingratitude of nations, that he congratulated himself on his having hitherto escaped a too decisive victory, and that he then and there determined he would now pull up at once, and leave the half-emancipated people to shift for themselves. It is also possible that his mind, weak, dull and plodding as it was, whatever people may say to the contrary, was to the very last bent on following his uncle's footsteps; and that, as he had won new Arcoles and new Rivolis, he deemed it necessary to wind up his exploits by a new Campoformio. At all events Venice was again, if not sold, at least abandoned, and almost with his last breath the Emperor bade his Minister intimate to the Italians that they should NEVER see Rome.

I was back in England less than a week after Villafranca, but soon recovered from a first fit of despondency, and have lived to see that the destinies of nations depend on something mightier than either the feeble will of an Emperor, or the spiteful suggestions of a baffled Emperor's cousin.

CHAPTER XVII.

CALABRIA.

Naples, Past and Present—A Bloodless Campaign—Garibaldi—A Voyage with Garibaldi—Mock Battles—A Débâcle—Campaigning Experiences—Calabria and the Calabrese—Garibaldi and a Priest—War in Post-Chaises—Garibaldi's Double—Naples Conquered by Telegraph.

In spite of all the charms of "Candid Mergellina" and "the smiling hills of Posilippo," Naples has always been and is to me a dismal place. The two things I most strongly object to in my intercourse with my fellow beings are dirt and beggary, and after fifteen years of free life, both those plagues are almost as much at home in the southern City as they ever were. Naples will probably be the last Christian community to aspire to the luxuries of pure air, wholesome water and an efficient drainage; the last that will provide for real pauperism, make vagrancy a misdemeanor and labour a duty. Schools, municipal government, police and all the other institutions, which the fusion of seven states into one has introduced throughout the Peninsula, have almost hopelessly broken down in Naples. Southern life opposes its *vis inertiæ* to all attempts

at improvement. It strikes me as a perpetual breach of the law of the universe. Naples is emphatically the place where no man works, where the sufferings of the poor inspire no sympathy, and the pleasures of the rich deserve no respect.

I have before me a letter published by a friend, endowed to an equal degree with sense and sensibility, and which describes the impression made on the writer by a first acquaintance with the "Land of the Camorra," in a style which, as I cannot hope to emulate, I must content myself with transcribing.

"I did not remain long, but I saw it in storm and I saw it in sunshine, and with all the advantages that the assistance and unlimited hospitality of an old resident could give. I visited its wondrous museums; drove on its lovely shores; made the usual excursions from it by railway and carriage; saw Vesuvius, now snow-flanked, then wrapped in lurid smoke under a brilliant sky; I stood among the ruins of Pompeii, watching the excavations and trying to realize the past—in fact, I led the ordinary tourist's life with more than many a tourist's advantages, but through all the wonders and all the beauty I never lost the abiding sense of a hideous background of woe and degradation, and I returned to Rome dominated and overpowered by one sole thought—how is it possible to enjoy material happiness in the midst of so much

misery, filth and actual starvation? Did I dream a hideous dream, or did I see boys almost naked in the snow and rain turning over a dust-heap and devouring the old cabbage-stalks they found? Did I see, or dream I saw, young women whose one ragged garment, blown aside by the bitter keen wind under the steely sky on Santa Lucia, left bare the poor gaunt limbs far above the bony knees? Were there really rows of half-famished, often crippled, men and children in the Toledo, hanging about every hack carriage, waiting for possible hirers, in the hope that some one in getting into one of these vehicles might throw a sou among them, or, better still, that some shawl, or rug, or umbrella might, by a flying leap, be reached and stolen from the back of the carriage?

"The sun shone and the grand carriages drove about with their freight of lovely women and children, clad in silks and velvets, and the half-naked mob stretched their limbs and lolled about the pavement in every sunny, well-sheltered nook, and sang and jested, and used such foul language in their horrid play that I shrank from their vicinity. And then the scene changed, and rain and snow fell, and the gay carriages disappeared and the '*civili*' went to their more or less luxurious or comfortable homes, and left the streets to foreigners and to beggars. And of these last, many heaped themselves in doorways on one another to maintain such latent heat as they

might, and the foul slush, black with human slime, ran slowly down from the steep alleys into which those among this miserable crew who had any lairs or shelter there, hurried and disappeared before the storm."

A picture exactly like the above, had I the same command of language, I could have painted of Naples, when I spent two successive winters there, in the worst days of Bourbon despotism, I am afraid to think how many years ago. It was the same helpless, crouching poverty, sloth and vice, among a vast mass of the lower classes—the same apathy and listlessness on the part of those among "their betters," whose sacred duty it should have been to raise the abject multitude from their prostrate condition. Since the early days of King Bomba, I have never been in Naples, except once, on the day in which Garibaldi's Red Shirts called the city to a new existence; and once more, on my way to Gaëta, the day after Cialdini's cannon had battered down the bulwarks of that last Bourbon refuge. During the twelve months of my recent visit to Italy I have travelled no further south than Monte-Cassino, having seen too much of the evils which I would rather not see in my country to be inclined to venture into the spot where every imaginable variety of those evils is concentrated and intensified.

As in the case of Lunigiana however, I travelled about these southern provinces from end to end at

an epoch made memorable by signal events, for, though not one of "the Thousand," I was with Garibaldi in Sicily, and followed him throughout his bloodless campaign of Calabria, my red shirt being the first that made its appearance in the Bourbon capital, several hours before the hero himself came in with the noon-train from Salerno.

I do not know that I could better illustrate the southern region than by a brief narrative of some of the salient incidents in that unique campaign.

I am not greatly addicted to hero-worship, but I remember the time when I travelled 150 miles to see Garibaldi. I was in Milan, in mid-July, 1859, on the fatal day in which the first report of the preliminaries of Villafranca became known; and before I left Italy sore at heart and disappointed, I allowed myself the indulgence of a trip to the Alps, where Garibaldi with his *Cacciatori delle Alpi* and *degli Apennini* was encamped at the foot of the Stelvio, uncertain whether he should acknowledge the truce or carry on the war on his own account. I found the hero ill in bed, at Lovere, in the valley of the Oglio, above the Lake of Iseo, at noon. It was said of him that he "was never ill on a battle day, and never well on the announcement of an armistice or a peace." He often suffered from rheumatic fevers, which, I was told, he could only shake off by incessant exertion. He

lay in his shirt-sleeves on a large bed, a lady—young and rather good-looking—sitting in a chair at the foot of the bed.

Garibaldi was then fifty-two years old. He had a bright, cheerful look; the colour of his skin and hair betokened a sanguine temperament. There was not the least approach to fierceness or wildness about that noble countenance. He looked intelligent, benevolent and affable; narrow about the temples, round-headed, square-visaged—a fine head, not very massive, a large yet not broad face. The hair was brown-red, and had been rich and glossy; the eye struck me as light grey, but with a tinge of tawny or lion-red in it. His voice was clear, ringing, silver-toned. Nothing could equal the gentleness, freedom and ease of his address.

He sat up in his bed, without the least effort, to welcome me, and like one free from suffering; he held out his hand, and there was a short talk between us, the result of which was the expression of a mutual hope to meet again...

Upon the strength of that first acquaintance, in mid-August of the following year, 1860, I left Genoa by the steamer Provence, as a steerage passenger, as I could not be taken on board the over-crowded vessel on any other terms, and two days later, on the 16th, landed at Palermo, where the Red Shirt was then already triumphant. I had barely taken up my quarters at the Hotel Trinacria when an intimation was conveyed to me that

Garibaldi had just arrived by night, on his return from a six days' trip to Caprera, and would leave immediately for Messina by the English transport steamer Amazon. At nine o'clock on the following morning I embarked and we started about half-an-hour later.

We had a goodly company on board. With Garibaldi were some of his oldest, trustiest and most intimate companions—Trechi, a major in the Sardinian army, who had resigned his place as an orderly officer near the King's person, and was now acting as bodyguard to the volunteer leader. He thought, and with good reason, that the King himself would be only too happy to don the red flannel shirt, and exchange the chamois, or *stambecchi*, he was now pursuing in Val Savaranche for a game which could not be "bagged" without some danger. Next to Trechi I recognized Augusto Vecchj, at whose house, Villa Spinola, on the Eastern Riviera, near Genoa, the expedition of "the Thousand" was planned and matured. There was Fruscianti, a Roman veteran, without whose attendance Garibaldi in those days never stirred, with two or three more gray-headed men who had been with him throughout most of his adventures in the New as well as in the Old World, and as many younger men accustomed to do his bidding, whether the imposed task might appear to them a practicable or an actually "impossible" undertaking.

Besides the Italians, we had also many of Gari-

baldi's foreign champions. Two Hungarians, General Türr and Colonel Count Teleki, some French and Swiss volunteers, and two Englishmen—one a so-called Major or Colonel X——, a youngish man, of small stature, but gifted with what he himself described as an almost "Herculean strength and heaven-storming courage," and a man with whose name, he told me, it would be "a shame for persons conversant with the incidents of the Crimean and Indian wars to be unacquainted." He was coming to fight with Garibaldi by land and sea, and brought him, in his own conceit, the aid of a whole host in himself, and was besides the owner of a yacht, said he, and meant to "embark a dozen English sailors in her, and about three-score volunteer dare-devils, of whom the world would hear something by-and-by." We were, however, warned to receive his assertions with a grain of salt by Major, or as Colonel X—— informed us, *Sergeant Major* Y——, an Irish officer, who was to command a battery of Whitworth guns, great reliance being put by himself on "the experience he had acquired by many years' service in India." There were two other Britons besides, men of a different stamp—a young officer of the Royal Navy, who had left his ship to place himself under Garibaldi's orders, and the master of the Amazon, who was equally enthusiastic in the hero's cause. I had not been many hours on board ere I made out a few of the peculiar charms by which Gari-

baldi seemed at that period of his life to exercise his great ascendency on all who approached him. We were in the Amazon quite *en famille*, and although the captain had placed his private cabin at the entire and exclusive disposal of his exalted passenger, Garibaldi came forth among his friends and made himself for a day perfectly happy, and even heartily merry, with all and each of them. The previous day had been tremendously hot—unusually hot, I was told, even for Palermo, and although we were at sea, we had not a breath of air, and no freshness enlivened the close furnace into which the sky and water were converted. Panting and sweltering all of us were; idle and listless enough; but the General moved among the various groups upon deck with a kind and an apt word for each of them—evincing that readiness of recognition, that perfect accuracy of recollection, that memory of men and things and circumstances, however trifling, which have ranked among the innate privileges of royal or heroic greatness. He had on his usual Dictatorial suit, the unfailing red flannel shirt, with a silk bandanna kerchief thrown loosely and widely round the neck, by way of a scarf, light gray trousers, and the modern wide-awake hat with a turn-up brim. The prodigious breadth of the General's shoulders, his colossal chest, and the natural dignity and lion-like majesty of his countenance again and again inclined the beholder to overrate his real stature, which was certainly not

above the middle size. I had to go near him and measure him by the standard of common men, before I recovered from the error into which awe for that commanding figure had both at Lovere and Palermo led me. The hair on a near inspection was dark-brown—darker by far than the beard, which was tawny or reddish. The beard was worn full and long. The cheek-bones were high, and the nose came down between them in a perfectly straight long line, even with the slightly slanting forehead. The complexion of that part of the face which was not hid by the beard, was not merely bronzed or sunburnt, but had a peculiar sanguine hue, and was thickly studded with endless freckles. This remarkable tint, the features, the colour of the beard, together with the calm but deep expression of the eye, had contributed to give his countenance that unmatched character which won him the appellation of the "Lion-face."

I had been for some time in doubt whether the secret of this extraordinary man's sway was love or fear, but no uncertainty any longer remained in my mind on the subject. There was a young captain, indeed, who told me "he would rather face a hundred Austrians than address even the most necessary question to Garibaldi, when he appeared among his men with the brim of his cap pulled down on his brows;" but on inquiry I found that this terrible chieftain had, as yet, had no occasion to shoot a single man for insubordination—the worst punish-

ment ever inflicted having hitherto been expulsion from the volunteer service. It was the sun of his countenance and the music of his voice that did it all. He asked them proofs of almost fabulous daring, but he was always with them at their sorest need, always foremost among them. There was something quite mythical in the ascendency he exercised. "The hero of a hundred fights," his followers said, Garibaldi "was never wounded" till, alas! a countryman's bullet was aimed at him at Aspromonte. The Tyrolese, it was added, had ceased turning their rifles towards him, for "the man had sold his soul to the devil to make his body bullet proof." The example of the chieftain had engendered a belief that the best safety lay in the utmost contempt of danger, and as long as the *prestige* lasted they acted up to this conviction.

Towards noon the General was engaged in a conversation with Türr, when his attention was attracted by the sound of merry voices in the fore part of the steamer. He walked up to his companions, who had got up a kind of volunteer concert; walked nearer and nearer, till he first stood, then sat, in the midst of the delighted group. All the unsuccessful attempts at national songs, hymns or anthems which had risen into ephemeral existence in Italy during so many political commotions were tried on board the Amazon, with indifferent success. Garibaldi lamented that Italy of all countries under the sun, Italy which was great in nothing if not in

music, should have no national air or anthem to boast of. "I could," he said, with a slight touch of bitterness, which has been felt by many an Italian patriot, "sing you the war-songs of half a score barbaric and even savage nations, but I could not quote three notes to thrill the nerves of an Italian as those of the 'Marseillaise' strike the soul of a Frenchman, or those of 'God save the Queen' sink home to the heart of an Englishman." He nevertheless made the trial of one of the many Italian failures, and his deep-toned, mellow voice—mellow in singing as it was sharp-ringing in conversation when raised above the ordinary pitch—his voice rose above the chorus of his old comrades, as they sang the ditty which seemed, among the many, to have most taken the hero's fancy.*

* I took note of the words of the song, and now write them down here, as I think they have by this time been utterly forgotten; and the fact that this was, if only for one day, Garibaldi's own melody, ought to give it some interest. It is Italy who is made to speak to her children :—

"Via, toglietemi dal capo
La corona delle spine,
Che una volta almen sul crine
Splenda il serto del valor.
Son l' Italia e son risorta,
Le catene ho tutte infrante,
Sorgerò come gigante
Al richiamo dell' onor.
Fui signora delle genti,
Poi fui schiava e piansi tanto;
Per più secoli di pianto
Questo dì compenso avrà.

We had three ladies on board who all joined the group, and to whom Garibaldi paid easy, good-natured attentions. There must be no gall in the composition of a man who could still, after the treachery of which he had a twelvemonth before been the victim at Como, find heart to be even barely civil to one of the sex. One of these female passengers was a professional singer, and she was, after a little pressing, induced to favour the company with some more cultivated strains. Garibaldi had sat down on a water-butt, resting his feet on the chain-cable, with his elbows on his knees, and his chin on both his hands, with an upturned face, listening to civilized music with the attention of a man fitted by nature to appreciate the beautiful whenever it falls in his way. One of his companions, a draughtsman, was ready with pen and pencil to catch the attitude of the group. The moment was well chosen, for the General had put on a calm and unaffectedly delighted expression.

Presently the "roughs" again took up the strain, and the concert assumed that wild and desultory character which belongs to such extempore performances. There arose loud peals of laughter, in

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Tutti all' armi, o figli miei,
Tutti uniti in una schiera,
Benedetta la bandiera
Che a pugnar vi condurrà.
Dal Cenisio alla Sicilia
A noi splenda Libertà.

which it did my heart good to see the man who had conquered Sicily, and meditated the conquest of Naples, on whose shoulders weighed at that moment the destinies of Italy, take his ample share.

I had a long conversation with Augusto Vecchj, his very dear friend, who had been out with him on his recent seven days' trip. They had visited the volunteer reserve encamped at the Golfo degli Aranci, on the north-east coast of the Island of Sardinia, when Garibaldi took a fancy to let a few of his most intimate companions into the privacy of his beloved home of Caprera. As they drew near the spot which has now become historical, some of his companions observed that "it was a very small isle," whereupon the happy owner bridled up and answered,—"Caprera is not small; wait till you come near it." They came to port, they landed; they climbed up the rocky steep, they puffed and panted, and lagged behind; and Garibaldi who was then not lame and had better lungs, laughed, saying, "Big or small, you'll find it hard work at this rate to go over the island from end to end." He was in a perfect ecstasy with all he saw, with the spot, the air, the look of the growing crops. "Didst ever see such artichokes?" and "wait till you taste our apricots and peaches!" Presently some of the domestic vassals of the solitary landlord came up—sheep, goats and pigs which he knew and recognized one by one; four donkeys, one of which he had

irreverently christened by the name of "Pio Nono," while the three others answered to other names equally illustrious in contemporary history, which I shall not write down. The harmless dumb creatures came forward to be patted by their kind master, and rubbed their long-cared heads against his legs. Then came the bipeds of the establishment, old field-labourers, perfectly unsuspicious of the greatness achieved by their master, and not caring a straw for it, who issued forth to greet him in their own rustic fashion, shaking hands and hugging him like a friend and a brother, as men who loved the man and the master and knew nothing of the General or the hero; and falling into immediate discourse about the "dun cow that had calved," and "the maize that was all withering in the drought," as if the fate of the world was bound up with the result of the harvest of stony Caprera. Garibaldi then descanted on the delights and capabilities of the place; the first-rate shooting and capital fishing; and urged Vecchj to part with his Genoese Villa Spinola, and purchase the little islet opposite to Caprera (there is a whole archipelago of mere rocks on that coast), adding as an inducement that "they would then reside *vis-à-vis*, and could establish a correspondence by signals, and let each other know the time of day."

Such was the man fifteen years ago, and such was at that time the adoration of men for him. People had not then heard of Aspromonte or Mentana, or

of the disastrous repulse in the Tyrol of 1866, or of the absurd crusade in behalf of Gambetta's Republic in 1870. Nor had the hero's speech at the Peace Congress at Geneva, that "there could be no question whether or not St. Peter's had been in Rome, since he, Garibaldi, could give them his word of honour that no such man as St. Peter had ever existed," as yet been reported in the newspapers. It was only too easy in later times to under-rate Garibaldi's political or social abilities, as it had been to over-estimate his military capacity. Garibaldi was neither infallible in council nor, as it turned out, invincible in the field. But it was too hard to say that "the ass's head was associated in him with the lion's heart." As a brave and good man—the most well-meaning and self-denying of men—Garibaldi stands alone in our age, and full justice will be done to his character when all that has been or may be imputed to him on the score of want of judgment and discretion shall be utterly given to oblivion.

Sunset overtook us midway on our voyage. At one o'clock, after midnight, we were off to Melazzo, where we landed Türr and Teleki, the former wishing to look after a part of his division encamped there. We awaited their return till daybreak; and a lovelier morning never dawned on a lovelier scene. We then weighed anchor, and three hours later anchored at Faro, where the head-quarters of Garibaldi's camp were then

situated. The General and some of his officers landed there: the other passengers were rowed in boats to Messina, an hour's sailing from the strait.

We were for a few days in Messina, where Garibaldi had assembled all his forces, amounting, it was said, to 20,000 men, who amused themselves by exchanging shots with the Neapolitans, still in possession of the citadel; and it was only on the 20th that we heard that Garibaldi, eluding the vigilance of the Neapolitan cruisers, had rowed across the strait and was already in possession of Reggio. Major Corte, and after him Bixio, had preceded their chief as vanguard, and overcoming the feeble resistance of the royal troops, had prepared everything for their leader's reception. A voyage from coast to coast had now become a safe and easy matter; and towards evening of the same day I hired a boat, and was wafted over to Reggio, in time for the campaign of Calabria, which was to begin on the following day.

At Reggio I provided myself with a full Garibaldian costume, and was enrolled as an honorary member among the officers of the General's staff. Garibaldi was, on the first outset, the only man mounted, a patriot of the neighbourhood having presented him with a small, but well-made and spirited Andalusian jennet. Two or three days later however we fell in with some peasants who had disarmed and unhorsed a party of Neapolitan

gendarmes, and we were all well or ill mounted on these troopers' chargers. For the stout gray Calabrian stallion that fell to my lot I paid 40*l*. It was one of the remarkable features of this singular campaign that it began on foot, was continued on the saddle, proceeded by post, and ended by railway train.

It was simply a mock-campaign; and I shall waste no time in recalling its main warlike episodes. Garibaldi had not taken a large force with him from Sicily, and with the exception of a few chosen bands, such as the Chasseurs des Alpes and his veteran company of Genoese sharpshooters, it was as inefficient as it was numerically inadequate to the enterprise. Such as it was however little was ever or anywhere seen of it. It was usual with Garibaldi to issue marching orders and then set off, himself first with such of his staff as chose to follow, taking for granted the army would come next, but seldom being at the trouble to ascertain whether it did or not. A general staff, a commissariat, an ambulance, all the appurtenances of a well-appointed military establishment, were supposed to exist; but everything must have been left at a great distance behind, as within several miles of the Commander-in-chief I seldom saw more than about forty or fifty, some of them not very soldier-like, and others very sorrily mounted, horsemen. Nothing could be more comical than the blank look of surprise with which the mayors and other

notables of the Calabrian towns we rode into, after all due humble obeisance and greeting to the Liberators, looked over the General's shoulders, and seeing nobody behind him but that motley staff, asked, "*Le truppe, dove le avite?*" Garibaldi might have answered, with John Gilpin, "My hat and wig will soon be here; I left them on the road." The Garibaldian army in the August and September of that year formed one straggling line from Reggio to Naples.

Fortunately or unfortunately no army was needed. It has hardly ever happened that the kingdom of Naples, either in mediæval or modern history, whether attacked by land or by sea, and whether invaded from the south or overrun from the north, has offered more than a three days' resistance. But against Charles of Anjou, Louis of Hungary, Charles VIII. of France, and Championet, there was at least some pretence of a fight. Against Garibaldi not one blow was struck. Out of a force of 80,000 men which the Bourbon King was said to muster, the only available regiments, mostly foreigners, had either already been overcome in Sicily, or were in reserve at Naples to make such fight as they could for the capital. The brigades and divisions scattered in the southern provinces still presented some semblance of order and cohesion; but they were all rotten at the core—ready to go asunder on the enemy's approach, as if by a preconcerted plan, and on a secret general under-

standing. The population of the towns was eager for news and all agog with expectation, but gave no sign till it saw the back of the troops, while that of the rural districts maintained its usual attitude of dumbfoundered and bothered neutrality. Some of the bolder youths, however, stirred up either by native leaders or by emissaries of the revolutionary party, took courage to muster up in the districts evacuated by the Bourbon's troops; they gathered in small bands, harassed the soldiers' retreat, disarmed the gendarmerie, and were soon able to act as a loose and wayward, but not unhelpful Garibaldian vanguard.

We had a first encounter on the second day after leaving Reggio. We had been quartered at a little village on the strait, of which the name now escapes me—I think Piale or Campo; but we were up before daylight, and marched with a few bands, each 200 or 300 men strong, in a northerly direction. As we went up a narrow defile towards one of the outer brows of the great mass of Aspromonte on that side, between Villa San Giovanni and Scylla, we were saluted by a few shells from small mountain-pieces, which made us aware of the enemy's presence. A body of 6,000 to 7,000 royal troops were there drawn up on a broad and lofty platform, flanked almost on all sides by deep ravines, and marked by dense and high shrubs, an invisible as well as impregnable position. We moved on, on our way, little affected by all the noise of that

cannonade, following the instructions of our leader, who was on the spot from the outset, conspicuous on every inch of vantage ground; and unhindered, without the loss of one man, we occupied all the heights which commanded the enemy's encampment, calm and silent and never firing a musket.

Garibaldi took up his position on the topmost hill, gazed long, and very long, with his powerful glass at the camp and all the vast surrounding scene, held earnest conference with his trustiest lieutenants, looking all the while exceedingly wise. My impression at the time and on subsequent occasions, was that the man had an innate intuitive genius for tactics, a *coup-d'œil* for a battle-field, like his townsman, Massena, and would have been a great General, had he had troops ready-made and brought into shape to his hand. He seemed always to study and lay his plan as if to give battle, though he had only after all ill-armed ragamuffins to fight it with, and played the game with mere counters with as much zest and interest as if they had been genuine coin.

This time, however, there was no action to be fought. Towards seven or eight o'clock the Bourbonist fire ceased, and the enemy sued for a parley. Two officers of rank, with aides-de-camp, came up to the hill where we stood with our chief, and an interview began which lasted for more than an hour and became rather animated at the end. The officers went back, crest-fallen; a long interval

ensued; noon arrived; the same officers again made their appearance, again discussed matters with the General, whose tone seemed to have grown louder and more peremptory. The negotiation was three times broken up and resumed, and we understood the difficulty to lie on this point, that the enemy wished to retire with arms and baggage, and Garibaldi would only allow the officers to leave the spot with their side-arms. The question was at last settled by the Neapolitan soldiers, who in the midst of the *pour-parlers* managed to slide down from the ravines of their camp, and smuggled themselves off along shore, by two, by three, by small parties, till the exit became general and complete. Some of our volunteers on the watch on the heights overlooking the sea discharged their rifles at the fugitives; but Garibaldi, convinced of the wisdom of building golden bridges to a flying enemy, gave immediate orders to cease firing, dismissed the Bourbonist officers, and towards evening led us to the abandoned camp, where a few horses and a little mountain battery with its mules were all the trophies the fugitives had left us.

A few days later, on the 30th—if I remember the correct date—an encounter of the same nature occurred at Soveria, on our way to Cosenza. The Bourbonists occupied the town with 16,000 men, and had both cavalry and artillery. Garibaldi was already widely in advance of his forces, and, as usual, had little more than his staff with him, but

we were told that Nicotera, one of his best champions, was in arms in the neighbourhood at the head of 2,000 of his own Calabrians, smart and determined men, though most of them only armed with their long knives and fowling-pieces. The town lay in a hollow, not fortified; and Garibaldi in his usual manner, with such a mere show of force as he could muster, occupied the heights, took a minute survey of the locality, and made semblance of compassing it on all sides. For a while the Neapolitans kept up a good countenance, and a few rifle-shots were even exchanged. There was a little confusion in our thin ranks; and on my hastening to the spot whence the report of the musketry came, was met by a youngish, rather plain-faced, slim woman, with her hair all down on her shoulders, her eyes staring wildly and her dress fluttering in the wind, who harangued our men in broken Italian—she was English, and married to a Garibaldian—and at the same time begged them "for Heaven's sake not to tell her husband that she was there." Neither she nor the men however ran the slightest danger. The Bourbonists hoisted the white flag and surrendered at discretion, and half-an-hour later we were in possession of muskets, sabres, lances, horses, mules and cannon in sufficient number to arm and equip two divisions.

From that day every attempt at resistance was at an end. From Reggio to Cosenza, and again

from Cosenza to Lagonegro, we never came to a lonely spot on the road where we had not the company of the poor disbanded royal soldiers. It was a sad, humbling, harassing sight. From the moment they yielded up the arms they had so ignobly wielded, Neapolitan soldiers and officers all moved off on their way homewards. It was, I believe, the first instance in history in which a conquering and a vanquished army were seen marching side by side, and almost promiscuously, without any hostile feelings, without any wish to harm, but also without any power to help each other. The sufferings of the dispersed Neapolitans were dreadful to behold, and at every step, as the numbers increased, rose in intensity. We must have passed at least as many as 25,000 in our progress. As they laid down their muskets, every man of them cut a stick out of the hedge, and began tramping. Footsore, and many of them shoeless, almost naked some of them—for they sold all available garments—they crept along, parched, burnt, starved. They laid themselves down, they cared not where, whenever fatigue overcame them, by the side of marshy grounds, from which they could hardly hope to rise on the morrow without a fever. Few ever passed us without begging lamentations, or without that peculiar gesture of the thumb and finger before the mouth, indicative of hunger in dumb Lazzaroni language. They applied to the syndics and other municipal authorities at the different communes on the road;

but towns and villages were often at ten or even fifteen miles' distance from one another; mostly up on the hills and away from the high road; and the means by which the corporations allowed them, first a *carlino* (about 5*d.*) a head, then three *grana* (1½*d.*), were presently exhausted, and the poor stragglers' application for even such paltry dole was flatly refused. Garibaldi had his own army to feed, and the very dispersion of these miserable deserters over so long a line of march would have rendered the distribution of relief an impossibility. His secretary bestowed a few piastres on every man who came near enough to the General's carriage, but it was like a drop of water in a vast conflagration.

No doubt a number of these men must have perished; but whether because they were cowed by their defeat, or because the best qualities of their kind Italian nature pressed forward in all this agony, though none were ashamed to beg, the thought that violence might wrest from their fellow-beings the charity their cry of distress failed to elicit, never seemed to strike any of that long train of desolate vagrants. It is true that the rural population, having come in for a large share of the weapons which either the vanquished had thrown away, or the Garibaldians, after providing for their own wants, had suffered to lie on the ground, were everywhere on their defence. Still the soldiery and the peasantry seemed both too utterly paralyzed

by the suddenness and magnitude of the catastrophe to have any spirit left for mutual hostilities, and those scattered weapons were not for a long time turned to the purposes of brigand outrage and civil warfare.

I need not say that none of us, and especially the non-combatants, were without our share of troubles. The trumpet's call roused us up at three o'clock in the morning, from what seldom happened to be a better bed than the bare ground. We were to start at four, by moon and star light, but seldom really managed to be off before five, at break of day. Garibaldi's officers must be their own grooms, for the soldiers appointed to them as servants were not yet mounted, and seldom, if ever, kept up with their masters. All the dressing, feeding, watering, saddling and bridling of the horses fell on their riders, with no other exception than Garibaldi himself, to whose horse's wants two of his favourite colonels, Trechi and Paggi, were proud to minister. The horses were stabled here and there in distant cow-houses; forage had often to be fetched from a great way off; the horses not unfrequently to be watered at the stream down the valley, a mile away. Then the shoes and saddlery had to be looked to; rough blacksmiths and awkward cobblers summoned from anywhere they could be found, and set to tasks for which they were miserably unfit. At last the General would mount, and ride off, and then all this preparatory work was cut short, and every one

scampered away after him as he best could, well aware that the leader waited for no man. We rode for three or four hours in the morning, came to a halt at ten or eleven o'clock at some village, or in a wood, where we had to look a long time for a basket of dry bread and hard cheese or sausage for ourselves, and nothing but stubble hay or a few leaves of the ripening Indian corn for our steeds. Fasting was however a more frequent occurrence with us than breakfasting. I remember one Sunday at Tiriolo, when the people were all at mass, we went from house to house vainly looking for what we might devour, and I alone found on the roof of a house otherwise deserted large osier trays full of figs, which had been put out to dry in the sun; and it was with that fruit alone that not only myself, but all the staff and the General himself, had to manage to keep soul and body together for many hours of that day. By way of compensation another morning, in a wood near Rogliano, I happened to walk past the hero, as he sat alone under a tree, with a goodly spread before him of the provisions that had been catered for his own consumption. He recognized and called me by name, and in the spirit of true comradeship he broke bread with me, and with his own formidable Durlindana cut me two slices of sausage, than which never was anything more intensely relished in this wicked world.

Again we set out in the afternoons, at three or four, and travelled on, jaded and exhausted, till

dusk or dark, when new quarters were beset with new difficulties. The heat and dust were tremendous, for the summer had been unusually fierce, and not a drop of rain had fallen for three months. Occasionally, by way of variety, we came to lordly quarters, some Palazzo dell' Intendenza, or some nobleman's mansion, and there, travel-stained and dusty, we sat down to champagne suppers or cold collations, supplied with the utmost profusion. Our horses and ourselves carried all we possessed; hardly a man indulged in a change of linen, most of us dispensed with linen altogether, the red flannel shirt answering all purposes of outward and inner raiment; and my gloves—the only gloves in all the General's suite—were the subject of pitiless ridicule. Few were fastidious about their ablutions, and a bath was reserved for the gods. I remember at Palmi, where the landlady grudged me water, I bought some of her vinegar, and with that and my soap managed to make myself as fresh and sweet as the best perfumed Turkish bath could have made me. Later on I used to go out in quest of running water, wash my only shirt in the stream and lay it in the sun on a bush to let it dry; or if that could not be managed, I put it on wringing wet and walked. Our very scanty supply of the first necessaries of life—brandy-flasks, tobacco-pouches, cakes of soap—all things had a perverse knack of losing themselves. Whatever luggage I had not left at Messina was contained in a middle-sized, solid leather bag, which,

by the General's own permission, I placed in Garibaldi's van. I never met that van again till it reached Naples long after our arrival; but as to the bag, I never set my eyes upon it or its contents to this day. With all this however we had the gift of forgetting our wants, and were very Diogeneses, ready to throw away our drinking-cups when we found that the concave of our hands answered the purpose. Our horses were not equally patient and cheerful; they jogged on and said nothing, truly, but looked done up and disconsolate, and seemed ready to drop with prolonged exertion. My poor young Calabrian stumbled wofully, and I, to save his knees and my own neck, had to lead him by the rein down the long weary descents. Garibaldi himself had the choice of two or three first-rate chargers, and he seldom rode in the afternoon when he had been in the saddle in the morning, or he betook himself to his carriage in the morning when he anticipated a ride in the evening. But the rest of us had only one poor brute a-piece; the rider a burden for his steed—the steed nothing but a plague to the rider.

We travelled at such breathless speed and were so much engrossed with the sense of our discomfort, that we had hardly leisure or inclination to look at the often smiling, sometimes dreary, but always grand scenery of the country we were traversing. Had it been at peace and we mere pleasure travellers, what a heaven of a country this Calabria would have been! What gorgeous expansive views of the

strait, of Sicily and Mount Ætna, as we rose at every step and looked backward at every winding of the terraced road! What vastness of land and sea! What fragrance in the semi-tropical vegetation! What atmospheric purity in the fresh though not cool hours of the morning, before dust began to rise under our horses' hoofs! At every step, as we moved away from the strait, the land looked more verdant and more beautiful; the plants, less vexed by the cool and at times keen tidal breeze, reached a higher degree of luxuriancy. We crossed vast olive woods, the timber of which shot up much loftier than I had ever seen either in the Riviera of Genoa or on the road up to Tivoli. The territorial wealth of the country was truly boundless, and the people were well off in spite of the efforts of the Government to drain all sources of prosperity; but roads were neglected, bridges there were none; and commerce and industry were at so low an ebb, that the country might be said to be almost utterly destitute of a currency. The boy that watered our horses and the barber who shaved our chins had often to let us go without payment, for they could not charge 20 f. for their jobs, and the copper which they could scrape together as change for our Napoleons would have burst the strongest pocket.

It was not the people's fault if we were not made as comfortable as we could have wished. Their manners were rather primitive and their mode of living somewhat worse than patriarchal; but one should have

seen, when reassured from all fear of the Bourbonists, the gentleness—the tenderness, I should say—not to speak of the wild joy and mad enthusiasm with which the General was welcomed among them. It was everywhere, "*Nostro Liberatore! Nostro Messia! Nostro Cristo!*" and men and women flung themselves on the ground before him, and any progress with all that prostrate multitude was out of the question. We came in for more than our share of the ovation; they hugged and squeezed us and kissed us, any of us, any part of us of our horses, of our clothes and trappings they could lay hold of, unmindful of manly dignity, heedless of our comfort — a savage love which neither entreaty nor rebuff could keep off. Then they would cut themselves in pieces to serve us; they jostled each other to be of use, but it was much hurry, little speed; they only imperfectly understood our wants, and were at a loss how to supply our demands. The arrival of the Staff, the marching in of the first column, created a world of bustle and confusion wherever we went. One man seized my horse's rein, handed it over to another, and this again to a third, till the poor starving animal was pushed out of sight and left standing; then we would be led to the right for a stable, and back again to the left, and up and down all about the place, till I began to think that there were no stables in it, or none at least that had not more inmates than they boasted accommodation for. By

degrees, however, everything found its level, and all that the town afforded was placed at our disposal. The horses being provided for, next came the question of our night-quarters; the good townsfolk snatched us from each other's hands; the man who had got me as a prize would take me half-a-mile from head-quarters, and perhaps half-a-mile from my horse's stable; he spread me a couch to which I preferred his dining-table or the bare ground; offered me a cup of wine to drink, and another of water to wash with; he closed the window I wished to keep open, assuring me I should catch my death of a fever if I breathed the night dew. I disregarded his well-meant warning, and insisted on having free air; but even then the officious traitor host would wait till I was fast asleep, and creep in, and fasten his accursed shutters, a trick which I only found out when I awoke half-choked and stifled. The supper in the evening was always plentiful; and the coffee in the morning never-failing; for the poor man and his good woman would sit up all night to see that their guest lacked nothing. The viands were savoury and heating, the coffee thick, and—why should I not say it?—nasty; but it was "*Quod habeo tibi do*," and I was glad it was no worse.

At Bagnara, on the terrace of a pleasant house near Altafiumara, an incident occurred which left a lasting impression upon my mind. We were seated there after breakfast, on the 24th of August, and

the General was surveying the movements of a huge war frigate that was looming in the distance under a high pressure of steam, when in came some improvised National Guards of the neighbourhood, bringing with them a sinister-looking priest, whom they charged with thirteen years' persecution of the Liberal party, and with the death, ruin or imprisonment of the most notable patriots of the neighbourhood. They had ferreted him out of some secret lurking place, and hurried him into the presence of their Liberator and Avenger at Fiumara, begging that summary justice might be done on the old treacherous, ruthless offender. The wretched catiff expected to be taken off to instant execution; he did not kneel, but crept and crawled on the pavement at Garibaldi's feet. It was a picture of such an abject terror, as I could not believe to see really evinced by any human being, and forcibly reminded me of the romantic scene in 'Rob Roy,' where the scout Morris is brought before the vindictive wrath of the female Macgregor. Who could depict the disdain and disgust of the great-hearted hero at such an exhibition? He shrank from the hideous object as if from the touch of a reptile, with an averted head and rigidly silent. But when the ill-advised culprit dared to adjure him "for the salvation of the soul of his beloved wife"—that Anita who had died a victim to her conjugal devotion in the disastrous retreat from Rome, in 1849—the General could contain himself no longer. He started up with a

dark cloud on his brow, and ordered his friends, who were as sick of the scene as himself, "by the God in heaven to remove the monster by main force, to bear him from the ground he was polluting with his touch, and not let him repeat a name which should never have come from such lips." He then calmly directed the officers of the local National Guard to hold a court martial on the offender and abandoned him to his fate.

At Cosenza, on the 31st of August, the campaign was virtually at an end. Upon landing at Reggio, eleven days before, Garibaldi had prophesied that he would, on the 8th of September, be in Naples in time to attend the famous solemnity of Piè di Grotta. Men shook their heads doubtingly at the time; but Garibaldi's words proved to be no idle boast. At Cosenza there was a concentration of forces: Bertani, we heard, had landed at Paola, the nearest seaport, with 4,000 volunteers. The provinces of Calabria and Basilicata were described as in full insurrection, and several of the best Bourbonist Generals had, we were assured, made common cause with the people. On the 1st of September Garibaldi left Cosenza for Tarsia, where he ordered his staff to march by easy journeys at the head of his columns, while he himself with Cosenz, Sirtori, Trecchi and a few aides-de-camp, proceeded in the direction of Naples in carriages. An arrangement which left me behind, could never suit me, nor fortunately did it agree with Major Caldesi and

other persons who were gifted with more presence of mind and resolution than myself. Upon hearing of the General's departure, four of us, after vainly ransacking the whole of Cosenza for a conveyance, pleaded our privileges as bearers of important despatches, ordered out the Archbishop's state coach and horses, and before noon, we were with Garibaldi at Tarsia. The General however had no room for us in his carriages, and post horses could not be had for other vehicles, for love or money. As it was becoming impossible to travel *with* our chief, we made up our mind to travel *before* him. By hiring donkeys, and leaving the General to his siesta, we out-marched him from Tarsia to Castrovillari, and there found post-horses idling in their stables; and following this plan ever afterwards, we managed to keep ahead of the conquering hero from stage to stage.

By great good fortune I had fallen in at Tarsia with the renowned "Garibaldi's Englishman," Colonel Peard, who also travelled on his own hook, and was in a state of even greater perplexity than I was.

I had met the Colonel sixteen months before, at the *table-d'hôte* of the Grande Bretagne at Turin, where he announced to me his intention of having some sport with the Alpine Chasseurs, and asked for direction as to Garibaldi's whereabouts. He was then a man of about sixty, of a tall athletic frame, imperfectly acquainted with the language, and ignorant of Italian ways. I found him again at

Lovere, in Valtellina in the following July, the day after Villafranca. There, many things were said of him; some true, some false. He professed, I was told, the utmost indifference to the cause he served. Between him and his fellow-combatants there was hardly any intercourse; Garibaldi allowed him to follow the camp, but the Englishman made war at his own expense and encamped apart from the volunteer corps. He received no orders, and asked for no information as to the General's movements. He was indefatigable in the march, intrepid in the fight. Garibaldi numbered fifty, perhaps one hundred of the best marksmen in Europe, but the Englishman was the deadliest shot. In the last encounter on the Stelvio, before the truce, the Tyrolese never succeeded in winging a single Garibaldian, while five of their number dropped mortally wounded from the cliffs, two of them under the unerring aim of the Englishman. Colonel Peard was never wanting in the hour of strife; he took his place in some hidden nook, aloof from the rest, squatted down on the ground, calm and impassionate, taking leisurely aim, like a sportsman awaiting the deer at the brook. He had a double-barrelled rifle, a sabre, no bayonet, and took no part in the *mêlée*, when the Garibaldians came to close quarters. It was said that when praised for his zeal in the Italian cause, he answered that "he was simply fond of shooting and must needs take part on one side or the other." He was

also described as keeping a memorandum book in which he had jotted down all the Austrians he had "bagged."

The Colonel had with him, when I met him at Tarsia an English officer of the navy, Captain F—— and a young American artist, whose name I forget, but who, I believe, supplied some illustrated paper at New York with sketches of the war. We thus travelled four in a post-chaise.

From Castrovillari we toiled up to Morano, a lofty, winding, weary mountain-pass, the summit of which marks the boundary between Calabria and Basilicata. This and the many other narrow gorges we had left behind, rendered these districts of Southern Italy almost impracticable for an army; the road running along the whole of Calabria was as bad as it could be, and it was the only road. By undertaking the defence of these defiles one after another, a mere handful of determined warriors could have stayed the progress of a vastly superior force for months. The Neapolitans however made no attempt to hinder us, and now we found all these important passes in the hands of the armed population, who greeted us, enlivening the scene wherever we passed with music and shouts and triumphant cheers. Thirty thousand persons, we were told, were up in arms in the Basilicata, and it was only at La Cava, near Salerno—the strongest of all those gorges—that the Neapolitans had assembled a force amounting to 12,000 or perhaps 15,000 men, with a

vanguard at Eboli. Relying on these reports, we travelled merrily from the summit of the pass at Morano on to La Rotonda, a place where Garibaldi was expected to halt for his noon rest; and thus on and on, always as his forerunners, we preceded and proceeded till we reached Castelluccio, a dark looking place in a hollow, where an unexpected reception awaited us. Here was a large party of Royalist troops, whose horse and cannon encumbered the whole main street of the town and barred our further progress. It was the brigade of General Cardarelli who had capitulated at Cosenza, and had been suffered by the people to retire to Salerno. He had come to a halt here however uncertain as to his future movements, and deliberating whether he should venture across the revolted provinces on his way to his King—a step fraught with danger; or whether he should rather join Garibaldi, with whom he had no sympathy—a step fraught with disgrace. In his perplexity he raised no objection to our progress and had the street cleared for our post-carriage; but we conceived some suspicions about the safety of Garibaldi, who was to come up in a few hours, and took all possible precautions to bribe messengers to warn him of the possible danger. Upon arriving at Lauria, we despatched 300 of the insurgents to encourage the National Guards of Castelluccio, and the presence of this reinforcement, we afterwards learnt, determined Cardarelli to declare for the revolution.

We proceeded on our way to Lagonegro and La Sala, and were on the 4th of September at Auletta. We had for some time been amused by the stir Colonel Peard's appearance created among the astonished natives. His long beard and Calabrian hat caused him to be mistaken for Garibaldi, and the reception he met with everywhere was perfectly overwhelming. It was to no purpose that we honestly tried to undeceive the frantic multitude. They professed that "they would respect the General's *incog.*, but they could not be deceived as to his likeness, having seen so many thousands of his photographs. Having thus silenced our scruples, and convinced us against our will, they shouted and gambolled, mad with excitement, in sight of their Liberator, only stopping short in their joy now and then to ask their wondering question, "Where was our army?" (*"Le truppe, dove le avite?"*) The people's obstinacy at first embarrassed us, and annoyed the Colonel; but in time we perceived that this premature announcement of Garibaldi's arrival could not fail to add to the enthusiasm of the bands hastening in arms from the neighbouring country, and to strike dismay and confusion among the royal troops. Auletta is the next stage to Eboli, and crossing the gorge of the valley of Diano, the key of the Basilicata on its frontier with the Principality of Salerno, we drove without hesitation into Eboli late in the afternoon of the 5th. The delusion of the people about Garibaldi's

double was even more complete here than it had been at Auletta; and Colonel Peard was accompanied to the inn by the populace, who paid him little less than divine honours—I, as the only one of the *partie carrée* who could communicate with the natives, acting as the great man's secretary, humouring them in their conceit, addressed some of the magnates of the place, who came in, deputation after deputation, told them that "the General" was a man of few words; that he was very much fatigued, and must not be disturbed, and begged that the assemblage in the street might be dispersed. My merest word was law: instant silence ensued; Peard withdrew to his bedroom, and I was left to sustain the part of the supposed Garibaldi's *alter ego*.

I asked my way to the telegraph-office—to know the news of the world being our most pressing need—and at once went there, accompanied by my friend, the English navy officer, Captain F——, and escorted with much ceremony by the Syndic of the town. The Neapolitan gendarmes had been in possession of Eboli till only two hours before our arrival, and were still at this very moment within three miles of the place. The telegraphic communication with Naples was as yet not interrupted. Our request to be allowed to inspect the day's telegrams, being backed by the Mayor's authority, and by Captain F——'s pistols, was instantly complied with, and the despatches were

laid before us. The most recent of these was dated, "La Cava, Sept. 5th, two P.M." It was addressed to the telegraph clerk, and said—

"Have you any information of General Cardarelli's whereabouts?" It was signed "Francesco"; and we understood that it came from His Majesty the King, who was at La Cava with a large force, bent on defending that formidable gorge, through which lay the way into Naples, against Garibaldi and all comers.

I considered for a few moments and then, turning to the clerk, said—

"Answer—'General Cardarelli has joined Garibaldi.'" I did not know for certain at the time whether that was the case; but I put the most plausible construction on passing events, and was not in the humour to strain at gnats. I scanned the face of the telegraphist as his fingers ran over the keys of his instrument, and gained full assurance that he was honest and well disposed towards us.

Presently the wires gave a signal and a second telegram came in.

"Where is now Garibaldi?"

The answer was flashed back instantly: "At Auletta." The General was not there yet, but would probably arrive in the morning, and, under the circumstances, I thought I might as well anticipate.

The next question was, "What force?" The answer was, "50,000 men,"—hardly an exaggeration, if one reckoned all "men with guns," who

shouted, "*Italia Una!*" from Cape Spartivento to the Gulf of Salerno, though Garibaldi's actual suite at that moment was hardly larger than that of Peard himself.

Then a sudden "happy thought" seized me, and I cried out—

"Add this—'Generals Türr and Medici have embarked at Messina, and are about to land in the Bay' (of Naples) 'with 5,000 Sicilians.'"

The message went its way, and the telegraph was mute. The spell was evidently working. If any force, large or small, could indeed appear before Naples, the King well knew that no one would answer for the loyalty of the place; and if an insurrection broke out in his capital, he would find himself in his Pass of La Cava between Garibaldi, who was advancing from the south, and his rebel subjects, who, with such leaders as Türr and Medici, would soon be storming his position in his rear. With respect to the expedition of those two generals I had no positive knowledge. I had heard vague rumours to that effect; but there was no more foundation for them than for so many other myths which were then in circulation. I acted upon the inspiration of the moment, and was surprised a few days later to learn the astonishing result.

The King, without awaiting the confirmation of the news, broke up his camp at La Cava; marched in all haste to Naples, and there embarked for

Gaëta, issuing orders that Naples itself should be forthwith evacuated and left to its own devices, and that his faithful troops should follow him in his retreat, without attempting further resistance.

On the following day, the 6th, we, the four of the vanguard, entered and revolutionized Salerno, where we were joined by Garibaldi the evening of the same day.

That night I slept at La Cava at the house of my new friend, the Marchese Atenolfi, and on the following day, the famous 7th of September, at eight o'clock A. M., General Frappolli, the English navy officer, the American artist and I—Colonel Peard being left at Salerno indisposed—drove into the city, preceding by four hours the triumphal entrance of the Liberator.

Such was the share I had in the memorable campaign of Calabria of 1860. My telegram to King Francis was as stunning and decisive a blow as any effort that Garibaldi, with so scattered and disordered an army as he had then under his orders, could have inflicted.

Those who have seen Naples in the evening of that memorable 7th of September will long remember the scene as the most astounding of political carnivals.

I had occasion to cross the narrowest and busiest streets along the wards of Santa Lucia and the Port, and found the industrious classes as silent

and unconcerned as if nothing had happened. But along the Riviera and the Strada di Chiaia the houses were mostly lighted up, and Toledo was thronged with an insane multitude, a prey to a bacchanalian fury which I should be sorry if I were able to describe. The crowd consisted of the lowest rabble, with a sprinkling of men and women of the middle orders. It was a flag and torch procession, with cries and shouts, such as can only be uttered by those brazen Neapolitan throats. Besides the incessant, deafening "Viva Garrubbaldo!" "Viva Galibalda!" and a hundred other distortions of that poor name of the hero of the day, to which we by this time had got accustomed, the cry was "*Una! Una! Una!—Una la volimo! Viva l'Italia Una! Volimo l'Italia Una!*" There were a few shouts for Victor Emmanuel, and an occasional exclamation of "Death to the Bourbon!" I was struck by the following doggerel couplet which I heard from a noisy chorus at a tavern-door in Toledo, and which is only too characteristic of the Lazzaroni nature:—

"Son partiti li Borboni,
Son rimasti li maccaroni;
Magna, magna a crepa-pelle
E Viva Vittorio Manuelle."

For the rest, the huge mob did not know what it wished or what all the noise was about. But it did not care—it swarmed and eddied, and boiled and bubbled about like the waves at Charybdis—throng of

carriages, throng of men, throng of women, the men brandishing naked swords or clubs, or waving flags and hats, the women bareheaded, dishevelled, with disordered garments, cheering, embracing, kissing as they passed each other, like so many victims of a rabid drunkenness, in which however drinking had no part. Many of the women were girls of bad character about town. They had been flaunting in hackney coaches from an early hour, and showed now how a legion of *Vesuviennes* could be much more at home here in sight of the smoking mountain, than in the Boulevards of Paris; but I saw also, in the evening, young women of a better description, girls in their teens, belonging to the well-to-do class immediately below the middle orders, modest girls in ordinary circumstances, as one could easily judge from appearances, but whom the tide of popular passion had allured into that giddy turmoil, and who acted as if under the privilege of a wild masquerade. We stood, my friend Silvio Spaventa and I, gazing at one of those young standard-bearers who was a paragon of fairness and loveliness—a cherub-face lighted up with the fire of more than human excitement. Such glowing eyes! such a flushed complexion!—you would have said an archangel leading the heavenly hosts! And before and after her there was a mingling and blending of classes and sexes—a full licence for beggars and pick-pockets to jostle honest citizens and patriots. That evening Naples

lay at the discretion of its populace—for such of the Bourbonist troops as had not left, or were not yet leaving, were shut up in their barracks—but happily the many-headed monster was in its best humour, and was too wild with joy to be liable to any other madness

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